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ABSTRACT

A distillation of hundreds of speeches, working papers, panel sessions, informal discussions, and formal resolutions, this report is derived from the First National Conference on Rural America (April 1975) and reflects emergence of a rural political platform. Attended by approximately 1,500 people from 49 States, Puerto Rico, and Canada, the conference was divided into 12 basic subject areas, which constitute the following major report divisions: (1) Self-Government in Rural America; (2) Rural Poverty; (3) Land, Resources, and People; (4) Rural Health; (5) Agricultural Production; (6) Employment, Jobs, and Training; (7) Housing and Community Development; (8) Energy and Rural People; (9) Public Education; (10) Rural Economic Development; (11) Rural Public Transportation; (12) Rural Justice and Legal Assistance. Major themes found interwoven among these 12 areas of concern are identified as follows: (1) the belief that sooner or later everyone will move to the cities and live happily ever after is "factually false and morally offensive"; (2) a new national policy is needed which recognizes the right of people to live where they choose and is sensitive to the survival of rural America; (3) Congress must redress long-standing rural inequities; (4) solutions to rural problems must be "rural" solutions; (5) to avoid the urban emphasis in national planning, rural "desks" should be established in appropriate Federal agencies. (JC)

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Toward a

PLATFORM FOR RURAL AMERICA

Report of the First National Conference on Rural America April 14-17, 1975

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METROPOLLYANNA is the belief, usually tacit, that sooner or later all of the people will move to the big city and live happily ever after.

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foreword

THE FIRST NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RURAL AMERICA was called jointly by the Rural Housing Alliance and Rural America, Inc. because somebody had to do it and nobody else seemed to be getting around to it. The primary purpose of the Conference was to give people from all over the nation and representing diverse interests an opportunity to get together to discuss the problems of rural people and consider ways in which those problems can be solved.

The Conference was attended by approximately 1500 people from 49 states and Puerto Rico and Canada. It was divided into twelve basic subject areas, identical with the section headings in the following report.

The Conference was financed by contributions from those who attended, the Co-Sponsors, the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, the Winthrop Rockefeller Charitable Trust, Mrs. Hope Spencer, the American Income Life Insurance Company, the Rural Housing Alliance, and by voluntary support from many individuals and organizations.

We are particularly grateful to National Public Radio's "All Things Considered" for their skilled and objective day-to-day coverage of the Conference.

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0004

contents

Foreword *page 5*

Toward a Platform for Rural America — Introduction *page 8*

General Recommendations *page 9*

SECTION 1 Self-Government in Rural America *page 11*
SECTION 2 Rural Poverty (Welfare-Income Maintenance) *page 13*
SECTION 3 Land, Resources and People *page 16*
SECTION 4 Rural Health *page 19*
SECTION 5 Agricultural Production *page 23*
SECTION 6 Employment, Jobs and Training *page 27*
SECTION 7 Housing and Community Development *page 30*
SECTION 8 Energy and Rural People *page 35*
SECTION 9 Public Education *page 38*
SECTION 10 Rural Economic Development *page 40*
SECTION 11 Rural Public Transportation *page 44*
SECTION 12 Rural Justice and Legal Assistance *page 47*

Resolutions Passed by the Conference *page 50*

Special Resolutions passed by sub-groups at the Conference *page 53*

Call to the Conference *page 56*

Conference Co-Sponsors *page 57*

National Advisory Council *page 58*

National Planning Committee *page 58*

Conference Working Committee *page 58*

Persons on the Program *page 59*

0006

an introduction ·

This is almost but not quite a platform. Rather it is a collage of the more significant observations and recommendations that emerged pell-mell from the four-day conference—a distillation of hundreds of speeches, working papers, panel sessions, informal discussions, and formal resolutions. The results, we believe, fairly reflect the delegates' major ideas, both their grievances and their aspirations.

Platform-writing is not the most orderly of crafts, and many such documents tend to suffer from too much blare and glare. The remarkable thing about **this** document, however, is not that it makes waves but that it makes sense. The 1500 delegates took their job seriously. They had convened in order to begin fashioning a political and economic agenda for rural America, and that is precisely what they accomplished. The text, then, is short on rhetoric and long on substance. That makes the reading a bit more difficult but considerably more rewarding.

As one reads the text one is struck both by the scope of topics considered—they run the gamut from agribusiness to "zero pop"—and by the unity of themes. The delegates were of many hues and backgrounds, they came from every corner of the land and they reflected all the varied, multi-shaded concerns of rural America. Yet to an astonishing degree they seem to have concurred on major issues. The notes of our Conference Reporters indicate that time and time again speakers in different sessions independently struck identical notes.

Consequently, it is possible to summarize the main themes running through this document; they are the same propositions that animated the conference and united the delegates.

1. The myth of "metropollyanna"—the belief that sooner or later everyone will move to the cities and live happily ever after—is factually false and morally offensive. It deserves a swift burial.

2. In its place we need a new national policy recognizing the right of people to live where they choose and not where planners and

bureaucrats wish to put them. This new policy would have as its stated goal the survival and prosperity of small farms and small towns.

3. Rural Americans are not getting their fair share of the federal revenue pie, either in terms of population percentages or, still more poignantly, in terms of needs. The inequities are long-standing and cut across every category and every federal agency of consequence, with particular emphasis on HUD, HEW, and DOT. Redressing these shameful imbalances ought to be among Congress's top priorities.

4. "Reform" programs which regionalize medical services, consolidate schools, etc., threaten to reform rural America right out of existence. Solutions to rural problems—must be **rural** solutions—a strengthening of local self-government institutions and an end to absentee ownership of land and resources.

5. The writers of our laws, guidelines, and regulations often pay no heed to the special requirements of rural Americans. In consequence, many national programs in health, welfare, education, and housing are exclusively urban and suburban in scope. To help correct this, Rural America "desks" should be established in each of the appropriate federal agencies.

In general, then, the delegates called for greater equity, more opportunities for self-government, and a reversal of policies which have consigned rural Americans to the valley of neglect.

One further note: What you are about to read represents the first attempt in several generations by rural Americans and their advocates to shape a long-range platform that will win friends, influence leaders, and eventually lead to far-reaching reforms. We judge from the mood of the conference delegates that this document is just the beginning—not a last hurrah, but an early dispatch from the front. As the text makes clear, there is much work to be done e'er we meet again.

Richard J. Margolis
Georgetown, Conn.
5/27/75

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Congress should establish a Select Committee on Rural America, patterned after the Temporary National Economic Committee, to study conditions in rural America, including government reports, monographs and public hearings.

2. There should be created a Department of Rural Affairs to administer those programs essential to the welfare of rural people, separate from the Department of Agriculture which has become, to a large extent, the Department of Commerce for Agriculture. This new department should include functions pertaining to rural development, housing, community facilities, education, health . . . , including all of the related functions of the Extension Service.

3. The major private fundations, spending quasi-public funds, have shown little concern for the problems of rural people. Their gifts are even more inequitably distributed than the public funds. If the private foundations cannot be persuaded to take a less parochial view of American life, the Congress should take action.

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SECTION 1

self-government in rural america

"Self-government is always better than good government."
HAROLD LASKI

There is a well established and widely held belief that the closer a governmental unit is to the voting population, the more control the voters exercise over its policies and actions, i.e., the closer to the people, the more democracy.

This belief has largely been a myth in many rural areas. Democracy or self-government is not a state of being. Rather it is a continuing process, achieved by perseverance based on a sense of personal independence and self-reliance. The task of keeping government the servant of the people is as arduous as it is everlasting, whether the government is local or Federal.

For people living in small towns and rural areas, failure or inability to participate in local government has contributed to their endurance of nearly half the poverty in America and continued suffering from inequities in almost every Federal program. Meaningful self-government includes gaining the power and control necessary to overcome these inequities.

Federal programs do not deliver a fair share of their goods and services to rural areas. In part, this discrimination results from the way laws and regulations are written. Some of the discrimination is inadvertent. Some special Revenue Sharing programs, for example, have been deliberately written to give the bulk of the funds to the larger cities. Too much money goes to jurisdictions that are relatively affluent while little is spent in areas that endure the greatest poverty. A much greater problem, however, stems from the fact that small towns and rural areas lack the expertise necessary to "hustle the system" and wheedle the bureaucracy out of the funds available. Achieving that expertise depends not only on financial, legal and technical assistance but also on constructive community organization and citizen participation. The most effective programs and policies designed to eliminate rural poverty will not work unless the people themselves become involved and concerned. It is up to the people, through proper organization and action, to see that opportunities become realities.

In the face of overwhelming absentee-owned economic power, the effectiveness of self-government is limited. Too frequently, in these quasi-colonial areas, local governments consist of officials who represent the absentee owners — not the people of the community. A West Virginia town government made up of lawyers representing timber or coal mining corporations is no more or no less than a "colonial" government. A town planning commission is not representative if it is comprised of second-home owners with a vested interest in a corporate owned ski complex located in that community.

Just as the people must be organized for more effective participation in the affairs of their own community, so must the government be organized to deliver the services and meet the needs of its residents. Many local jurisdictions in rural areas suffer from inadequate revenues and unprofessional administration. Community organization and citizen

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Andrew Young

What we lack at the moment is a hard, comprehensive federal policy for rural revitalization.
John Wilson
D.C. Councilman

participation cannot be productive if individual local governments lack the resources and technical assistance necessary to perfrom some of the functions demanded of them. In 1967, there were 81,248 local governmental bodies in America with 62% of all municipalities serving fewer than 1000 people. This is not to say that small is not beautiful. Rather it is to say, that effective sub-state planning can help these small communities meet some of their needs.

Presently sub-state planning and development districts are not always responsive to the needs of the people they are supposed to serve. Multi-county organizations should be a means for local communities to get professional help in applying for State and Federal money, but many planning and development districts overlap and compete for the few resources available. Without effective Federal coordination, these agencies may work at cross purposes. Presently, there are over 4000 sub-state planning and development organizations in the country. If these districts are not subject to control by elected officials and community residents, they will only undermine and obstruct self-government.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *Citizen Participation* There must be more participation in the decision-making process by those whom the decisions effect. Under-represented groups including women, youth, minorities and low income people must have a greater voice in the political process. Participation in the electoral process is the right and responsibility of every citizen. Yet his knowledge and advice are also needed in the planning and decision-making. Elected officials at every level of government must give increased attention to improving communications between themselves and their constituents, and Congress must put a premium on such performance.

2. *Community Organization* Local residents must mobilize around specific problems, e.g., land-use, property taxes, or increased utility costs. There are many ways to organize community residents around these issues including public hearings and town meetings. Government activities and legislative action must be carried out in the open.

3. *Local Control* Sub-state planning agencies and development districts must be under the control of locally elected officials who are representative of and accountable to local residents. The ultimate power and control of these agencies must be kept in the hands of the people.

4. *Revenue Sharing* If General Revenue Sharing is going to continue to exist:

(a) Legislation should require local officials to inform and educate citizens about Revenue Sharing. In most communities, there is little public information and education about the General Revenue Sharing program. Elected officials and local citizen groups have not taken on this responsibility effectively.

(b) Federal money must be made available for citizen planning efforts and for more thorough reports and informative material on programs.

5. *Small Community Administration.* There should be created a Small Community Administration, an independent Federal agency or an office within a Department of Rural Affairs through which small towns and other rural governments can obtain assistance in securing Federal funds. Because small towns tend to lack technical expertise, a Small Community Adiministration could become a vital liason between the Federal agencies, the Congress and local rural government.

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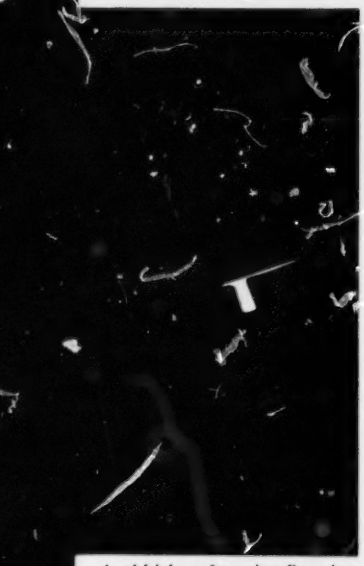
SECTION 2

rural poverty, welfare and income maintenance

"In a nation in which the wealthiest 5% possess more than eight times the wealth of the bottom 50%, in which the percentage of the national income going to the lower fifth of the population has remained the same for 45 years, in which 40 million people remain poor or near poor, more than a food stamp, UIC, or child feeding program is at issue . . ."
REPORT OF SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE ON NUTRITION AND HUMAN NEEDS, June, 1974.



Archbishop Ignatius Strecker

Poverty in rural America remains pervasive and persistent. The studies, exposes, public promises, and Great Society Programs have left unsolved the problems of many low-income rural people.

In 1973, 40 percent of the Nation's poor lived in nonmetro areas, a share far greater than the nonmetro share (31 percent) of the total population. (Poverty here is determined by the official government formula which is based on USDA's nutritionally adequate food budget for "emergency or temporary use when funds are low." There is almost universal agreement that this formula understates the situation.)

In nonmetro areas, the incidence of poverty in 1973 was 14 percent compared to 10 percent in metro areas.

Poverty was subsantially more prevalent among the minority population than among the total population, and greatest of all among minorities living in the most rural nonfarm counties. A 1970 study showed that almost 60 percent of the minority persons in the most rural county group had incomes below the low-income threshold.

Federal programs designed to alleviate poverty have failed to recognize the disproportionate needs of rural areas. For example, less than a third of the food stamp bonuses go to people living in rural areas, only 23 percent of the Medicaid outlays, and only 22 percent of the Community Action Agency funds.

Factors accounting for the failure of the food stamp program to function effectively in rural areas include: (1) lack of promotion on the part of USDA; (2) bonuses which are so low they do not cover the cost of transportation to and from certification offices, issuance points and food stores; (3) the time consuming and degrading process entailed in applying and being periodically recertified for food stamps; (4) the chaos created by certification requirements.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. *Full Employment* — There is obviously no single means by which the suffering and degradation of poverty can be eliminated. From "thirty dollars every Thursday" to the "negative income tax", the simplistic approaches turn out to be traps by which people's attention is diverted from evolutionary improvement of existing programs.

(a) The most important means by which poverty can be reduced and welfare roles cut is for the Federal government to undertake — in good faith — a program for maintaining full employment, meaning that every adult person who is able and willing to work can find a job which will enable him or her to live without charity. The best strategy for achieving

0012

this long-evaded responsibility is to combine the unemployment compensation insurance program with a public employment program so that the community will have to foot the bill, one way or another. In the past it has been the ability of the establishment to use mass unemployment as a substitute for constructive measures that has postponed the day of full employment.

(b) We cannot have full employment unless working parents have some means of providing care for children. An adequate child development program to care for children, to provide jobs for caretakers, and allow parents who want to enter the labor market to do so, is essential.

(c) A government employment service which does more than register farm labor contractors and channel farmworkers to agribusiness is essential. We have never had a real public employment service, and it is essential that we get about the task, beginning with the Federalization of the existing apparatus.

(d) A comprehensive approach is required, including as examples: use of government procurement programs to achieve balanced, ecologically sound economic growth; measures to inhibit the further concentration of land ownership and control and the displacement of working farmers; increased funds for community economic and social improvements; increased attention to our forests and park lands, to conserve them and increase the national wealth . . .

2. *Welfare Rights* The rights of citizens to Federal welfare should be national rights and not subject to veto or evasion by state or local governments. With the exception of social security, all of the major income maintenance programs are dependent on state cooperation and financial contributions. The limited revenue raising ability of the poorer states which tend to be rural is the primary reason these programs discriminate against the rural poor.

For example, in rural Mississippi AFDC recipients get $14.30 a month; while in New York they get $98.48. New Mexico limits eligibility for Medicaid among families of four to those with an income of $204 or less a month; in New York the corresponding maximum income is $471.

3. *Food Stamps* Extend food stamp and other nutrition program benefits, improve outreach, eligibility requirements, and cost of living determinations. Rural people have special problems in utilizing the food stamp program. They often have miles to travel to become certified, receive stamps, purchase food. They need help with transportation, they need simplified certification and stamp delivery systems. They need access to a wider variety of food markets including food buying clubs and cooperative stores. Seasonally employed rural people need a flexible system where they can be certified for a year on the basis of their average yearly income, with ability to vary size of their monthly stamp purchase.

4. *Social Security and Supplementary Security Income*

(a) Income guarantees under SS and SSI must be raised to provide a level of income which at least meets the government's own poverty definition. For many older rural people social security income is their only income. They have been bypassed by private pension plans promoted by unionized workers and found predominantly in urban areas.

(b) The asset test for SSI, (currently $1500) must be substantially raised or eliminated. Rural poor people more often have and need assets in excess of that amount (land, automobiles, etc.) to survive. Until SSI benefits are high enough to meet all contingencies, people should not have to strip themselves of all meaningful savings to qualify.

(c) SSI should provide payments for dependent family members, i.e., children of disabled persons and couples even though in the latter case one is not independently eligible.

00113

(d) SSI age requirements should be lowered to 62 to recognize the onset of financial problems associated with old age.

(e) Cost of living increases in SS and SSI should not result in decreases in other benefits such as veterans' pensions, public housing rents, food stamp bonuses, etc.

(f) Individuals should have a right to speedy determination of eligibility for SS and SSI and when denied eligibility should be adequately informed of their right to appeal such determination. Access to the appeal process should be simple enough and accessible enough not to require the assistance of counsel, or where counsel is necessary it should be provided by the government at government expense.

(g) Stricter procedures should be established to protect agricultural workers from having SS contributions deducted by crew leaders and farm employers and not paid and reported to SSI. Because of abuses of this nature in the past all farmworkers who retire should be declared eligible for benefits upon a reasonable showing that they were employed for the minimum number of required quarters.

5. *General Assistance* The Federal government should initiate a Federal general assistance program for all persons whose needs are not met by other programs. General assistance varies widely from state to state and those states who exercise little or no responsibility for general assistance tend to have a low per capita income and tend to be rural.

6. *Poverty Level Index* The present poverty level index should be abandoned in favor of an index which would more accurately reflect the needs of the poor.

0014

SECTION 3

land, resources and people

"The earth and its resources belong of right to its people. . . . Without natural resources life itself is impossible . . . The first duty of the human race . . . is to control the use of the earth and all that therein is. Conservation means the wise use of the earth and its resources for the lasting good of man . . . the foresighted utilization, preservation, and/or renewal of forests, waters, lands and minerals, for the greatest good to the greatest number for the longest time . . . Concentrated Wealth attributes the prosperity and progress of the United States to what it calls free enterprise. To it free enterprise means freedom to take, keep and control all resources, services, and opportunities it can, and charge for them the last possible cent.

"Just as Feudalism, with its tyranny, finally made itself intolerable, so too plutocracy, with its rule over the man by the dollar, with its hardships for the many and its luxury for the few, with its greed and its injustice, must be made to travel the same road. It is time for America and the world to move on from a social order in which unregulated profit is the driving force. It is time to move up to a social order in which quality of opportunity will cease to be a dream and actually come to pass." Gifford Pinchot, 1947.

Boren Chertkov

Thus wrote the Grand Old Man of the Conservation movement, the father of the Forest Service, the leader and champion of the use and control of the resources by the people instead of the plunderers and the plutocracy. He was a Republican.

Land and water are the resources from which all life springs, and on which all life depends. It has been our enormously rich heritage in both which has accounted in large part for our standard of living and our military power; insofar as both land and water have been widely held has come much of our freedom; slaves do not own land. And on and beneath the land we have pre-empted incredible wealth in forests already grown; in the rich deposits of minerals; coal, oil and gas, which derive from the congealed power of the sun and water and earth over eons.

But the rich can afford to be profligate, and for three centuries we have abused and despoiled the land. We have treated it as a commodity to be bought and sold as though some Henry Ford or Andrew Mellon had only to build a factory to make more. We have robbed and continue to rob the soil of much of its fertility. We have polluted our waters until the lakes have died or are dying and will no longer support life; the little trout streams of Appalachia, and elsewhere, run poisonous with acids and chemicals and dark with filth from the mines; the great streams are sewers, thick with the wasting soil "too thin to walk on—too thick to drink"; and to offset the flood of pollution we pour chemicals in the drinking water which give us cancer.

The flood of oil and gas on which we floated many Americans to a level of living unprecedented on the earth, runs thin and we are preparing to swap more of the fertility of our soil for more of the same abroad. (A generation ago you could drive 200 miles along the Gulf Coast in Texas and never be out of sight of a forest of "gas flares",

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waiting, and for years in the Texas Panhandle natural gas roared through a 20 inch pipe so loudly it could be heard 10 miles away, so the owners could strip the priceless gas of its gasoline content at ⅓ of a cent per thousand cubic feet.)

Ownership and control of the land, farm land, forests and grazing land, over coal and other mineral deposits have become more and more concentrated. Corporations control 9 percent of our farm land; 5.5 percent of our farmers (151,000) control over half the farm land; the eight largest energy corporations own 64.6 million acres of land, along with a good chunk (who knows how big) of our oil, gas, coal and other energy and mineral resources; timber companies hold 34.8 million acres (7 times the size of the state of New Jersey); railroads own 22.8 million acres; and that is only what we know about because we do not gather the figures with much care. Behind these incomplete figures is a web of interlocking directorates giving what Pinchot called "the plutocracy" incredible wealth and incredible power over the rest of us.

In the West where water was always more precious than land, the Congress provided that subsidized irrigation projects carried a price to land owners—a limitation of 160 acres per person, 320 for a married couple—but the violation of the Reclamation Act is nearly wholesale and has been for decades. Enforcement is more token than real, and when it does occur, the government has failed to provide credit for land acquisition. So nobody but the rich can afford to buy the developed land—an investment of $250,000 and up. In violation of the Act, the government permits the original owners to profit from the public investment and their delay in abiding by the law.

Black ownership of land has shrunk to less than half of what it was in 1950 . . . The farming methods of large scale agriculture not only displace the small and medium farmer, but they also displace any farmer who cannot compete with vertically integrated "corporate" agriculture. "We had to lease all our land this year to the packing company", the woman said, "because we could not afford to operate it". Her land was worth $800,000 dollars and they could not afford to operate it in competition with the packers. When farmers go, small business goes too. Farm workers starve or go to the city.

Energy intensive agriculture which requires excessive fuel/fertilizer/pesticides and herbicides poisons the land and water.

> "I saw two old turtles, first I've seen in years, and I picked them up and took them out to the garden to catch insects", the Texas farmer said. "We've killed not only the earth worms, but nearly everything else with pesticides and with the acids from the defoliants on the cotton, and to sustain our yields we add a ton of fertilizer every year to the acre. The soil is dead or dying, but as long as that's the system, farmers like me can't help themselves. We go on killing the land until we lose it."

Every year we lose 2 million acres of land from agricultural production, a rate of over 5,000 acres a day . . . to urban sprawl, freeways, airports and recreational developments. In Northern Virginia, in April, 1975, an impressive aggregation of water engineers said they had done all engineers could do to clean up the nation's water supply . . . There is a limit to what we can filter . . . the only way to stop the steadily increasing pollution of our water supply is to change the practices of industry, (dumping chemicals and metals into the streams) and of farming which has become an even greater polluter.

Land and water are irreplaceable resources and their conservation and their preservation from pollution should be paramount—with private owners—and in government law and policy. This is a responsibility of stewardship and a matter of survival.

Replenishable resources like grazing lands and forests must be preserved and replenished for they are not only priceless *per se* but are

00116

indispensible in conserving land and water.

Exhaustible resources like oil and gas should be conserved and put to the highest social uses—not wasted for maximum profit.

The concentration of ownership and control of farm lands has already gone too far and must be dispersed among working family farmers. This is the best means for protecting consumers, assuring an abundance of output, and conserving land and water from intolerable exhaustion and pollution.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. *Stop diversion of farm land to other uses*

(a) Both the federal and state governments must act to slow the loss of farm lands to other uses, proceeding along with a national rural land inventory on ownership and best potential use. Some means of actually freezing farm lands to prevent their destruction for other purposes must be found—including compensation for legitimate personal losses.

(b) State and local governments should cooperate in programs for lowering taxes on actual farm land, as long as it remains in agricultural production, with penalties to recapture foregone taxes if land is sold for other purposes.

(c) Speculation in farm lands must be inhibited and the best immediate means is repeal of the capital gains privilege.

2. *Working family farmers* Should be the basic structure of U.S. agriculture. To this end:

(a) The 160-acre limitation in the Reclamation Act of 1902 must be enforced, but this will fall far short of the original or present intent unless the Congress provides long term credit at low interest for family farmers.

(b) Both federal and state governments should enact legislation banning ownership of farm lands by corporations.

(c) The tendency towards ever-increasing concentration of ownership and control of land is related to the concentration of control over farm supplies and marketing corporations. A vigorous enforcement and possibly a strengthening of the anti-trust laws in both directions would protect the working family farmer from pressures beyond his control which jeopardize his survival with benefits to consumers.

(d) High energy agriculture, including the mass use of insecticides and other chemicals, favor the development and expansion of factories in the field—and is inimical to working family farmers. With cheap oil and gas a thing of the past, policies to adjust to this drastic change with the past must favor the working farmer.

3. *Land*

(a) A national land use planning bill, providing funds for state planning agencies and requiring coordination of federal land use programs under one agency, is essential.

(b) Strip mining—The mindless destruction of the land through strip mining must stop—and it can be stopped only by Federal legislation similar to the two bills vetoed by President Ford.

4. *Forests* National forests are being neglected at great cost to everybody, and the penny-wise policies of leaving them unplanted, unthinned, etc. must be abandoned.

5. But the ultimate recommendation is for the development of a new ethic toward nature of which the land and water are only part, an attitude that this finite planet is man's only home; that man is not God and must live with nature, not control it; that all of us are stewards of this earth, and those who are a bit reluctant to be so must be required to abide by the new common sense of the community. The details can be had.

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SECTION 4

rural health and medical care

"Health care is a right for all and not just a privilege for a few. . . . We have the best health care in the world in the United States—but the problem is that it's reserved for the rich and the powerful people of this country." Senator Edward Kennedy.

. . . we have the best health care in this world in the U.S. — but the problem is that it's reserved for the rich and the powerful people of this country.
Sen. Edward Kennedy

Nowhere in the United States is the need for an improved health system more pressing and nowhere is it less adequate than in rural America. The situation is getting worse, not better, despite the cheerful reports of the American Medical Association and some government officials. In the last 30 years the net effects of tardy and miserly government efforts have not improved conditions so much as they have just barely prevented them from becoming scandalous!

Medical care costs money, and the median family income of rural people is about 27 percent less than that of urban families. Moreover health insurance is much more commonly available in urban areas where approximately 90 percent of the families have some kind of medical insurance contrasted with 60-65 percent in non-urban areas, depending on the rurality of the areas. With lower incomes and less insurance, rural people can afford less medical care.

Equalizing the income of urban and rural people—even if it were possible before Kingdom Come—would not solve the problem although it would help greatly, because a basic reason for poor medical care is the shortage of doctors and other medical personnel and the gross maldistribution between rural and metro areas. With roughly 30 percent of the nation's population, rural America has the services of 12 percent of the doctors and 18 percent of the nurses. For the whole nation, there is a doctor for every 665 persons. In the cities there are only 500 persons per doctor. In rural America there are 2400 persons per doctor—a five-fold spread. Experience indicates that decent medical care can be provided with one doctor per thousand people. There is obviously a shortage of doctors and other health personnel, and those we have are distributed without much regard to need.

Since 1963, the number of counties without a single physician has increased from 98 to 135, and in large numbers of counties the number of doctors has declined. The "no-doctor" areas include 4 percent of the nation and a half million people. In the 500 State-established "Economic Areas", 300—"almost without exception rural"—have less than the accepted minimum of 1 physician per thousand people. It would require 19,600 more physicians properly located to raise the average to the desired level. The entire American doctor producing apparatus produced only about 11,613 in 1973, (only 9270 were licensed) augmented by foreign graduates which net us an additional 7,419 per year. In other words, to remedy the deficit in rural areas would require over 100 percent of the U.S. and foreign graduates for a full year—not counting deaths and retirement.

The cost of medical care is skyrocketing, rising an average of 6.6 percent a year from 1967 to 1971 and leaping at a rate of 18 percent a year since price controls were lifted in 1974. A week in the hospital brings an average bill of $990; the delivery of a baby costs $950. Twenty-two percent of all families have medical bills in excess of $1,000 each year and 25 million people have no health insurance, with the uninsured

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concentrated in rural America.

Medical care alone is not a health system. Health and nutritional education, food, decent housing and preventive measures are vital.

In the prevention field: 30,000 communities lack a centralized sanitary water system and this does not include isolated population; sewer facilities are a serious problem for millions. In West Virginia, 60 percent of all homes have dangerous sewer systems. Only 60 percent of our children are immunized against communicable diseases.

Sixteen Federal programs in 1973 spent $833 million on health and medical care. In only three of these sixteen did rural people get more than the 30 percent which a simple population base would have dictated. The range for rural was from 3.1 percent upward. The largest Federal expenditure was for Health Services Delivery and rural people got 6.8 percent of the total.

> "Statistics tend to mask the humiliation and miseries endured by rural people as they seek health care in a 'sellers' market. Many small town residents must travel fifty or even 100 miles for ordinary medical service. Families without automobiles are out of luck, since public transportation in rural America has all but disappeared. In many Appalachian communities a person wanting to see his doctor in town often pays a neighbor as much as $30 for taxi service." *

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Lorin Kerr, MD

1. *Health—not just medical care* The emphasis of citizens and Congress should be on *health*—not medical care. It is ridiculous and wasteful to talk about a health system for rural people without including preventive measures, including health education, unpolluted water, sanitation facilities, decent housing, and nutrition.

2. *Private medicine has failed* It is the responsibility of government to protect the people where the private market has failed. What is required is a willingness to do battle with ideology, a willingness to do battle with special interest groups, a willingness to experiment, to try, to fail and to try again.

3. *National Health Insurance* The single most important need is for adequate national health care legislation which should include:

(a) Comprehensive benefits, including prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation, available and accessible to all people with no barriers to service.

(b) Financing by a progressive income tax surcharge for health.

(c) Administration for interrelated quality and cost controls and providing meaningful consumer involvement in the development, implementation and operation of all health programs.

(d) Medical services can best be provided by public or nonprofit prepaid group practice, controlled by those it serves.

(e) Capital funds adequate for acquisition of necessary facilities.

(f) Provisions for eliminating the shortage of *all* health personnel.

4. *Rural needs call for flexible programs* Legislation designed to solve the health problems of the majority of the population which lives in metropolitan areas will fail to solve the problems of rural people. Rural areas cannot and should not allocate their resources like mini-urban areas. Programs should be structured to permit the people involved to determine their own program and its future . . . comprehensive programs that admit of diverse priorities and permit and encourage the development of community responsibility and community determination.

5. *Rural needs demand innovations* The use of "physician extenders"

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*Margolis, Richard, "Notes on the Health of Rural America", April 1975.

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—nurse practitioners or physicians' assistants—is another basic approach to increasing the availability of health services to under-served people, rural or urban. In order to be most effective, such personnel should be members of teams containing physicians and others. By such team membership, safeguards can be more readily established against abuse of the concept—for example, the use of these allied health personnel only for the less sophisticated, rather than the less seriously ill, patients. Such safeguards might well be written into legislation authorizing the work of physician extenders.

Small rural clinics, staffed by nurses and paraprofessionals, can provide most medical services including some from which they are excluded by law, such as prescriptions for drugs and serving patients who qualify for Medicaid. These clinics, along with outreach programs, should be allocated Federal funds for training of paraprofessionals and teaching self help methods.

The Social Security Act should be amended so that Medicare, Part B, and subsequent forms of National Health Insurance, would include among eligible benefits the primary health care services rendered by a physician or physician extender, provided that the care is rendered in accordance with the prevailing medical practice laws of the State, and **further** that Medicare Part B and subsequent forms of National Health Insurance, should reimburse for primary health care services in community clinics at a reasonable rate, commensurate with cost of providing these services.

6. *Rural people's greatest need* In rural America today the greatest need (assuming funds are available) is for adequate ambulatory medical care which can best be provided by multi-specialty medical group practice with ready access to nearby hospitals.

7. *Caveat on Regionalization* "Regionalization" in medical care—in the best sense—can be useful, but it has an ominous and too-familiar ring, bearing too striking a resemblance to the notions which have spelled the decline of small towns, the elimination of local hospitals, the trend from consolidation of schools to centralization for the administrator's sake; to the abandonment of railroads, the mapping of highways which eliminate small towns. (Adulterated metropollyanna is "regionalization", "centralization" and "growth centers".)

8. *Medical schools* There should be an assessment of the health career education system to assure that we are producing enough practitioners—and the proper kind of practitioners to meet the requirements of society.

Medical schools, medical students and the Congress must be impressed with the fact that the $50,000 which it costs to educate a doctor is paid primarily from public funds, not by the student. The same is true of all other health personnel. The community has a right—in exchange for this public subsidy and a medical education—to exact a pledge for service anywhere the welfare of the community requires such service.

A health manpower program providing for required practice in rural areas should be enacted and every graduate from any Federally subsidized medical school made subject to it without regard to race, sex, income or geographic origin. Provision must be made for training paramedical personnel as extenders of existing service until a major overhaul of the distribution of physicians can be completed.

There should be no connection between student loan provisions and required service in rural areas. This is class legislation.

Most of the existing schools (for M.D.s and all other medical personnel) should not be expanded. Funds should be put into the creation of or

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expansion of schools which function and recruit their students from rural America and other medically underserved areas.

9. *Occupational diseases* "Occupational diseases infect the nation like a plague. . . . the American workplace is a chamber of horrors and the . . . hours a worker spends on the job (are) the most dangerous of his life." (Arnold Miller, UMW)

Prevention of work related illness would be a greater contribution to reducing death and disability than the virtual elimination of communicable disease.

(a) To this end, it is essential that there be a Federal Workman's Compensation law as State laws are notoriously inadequate, ineffective and unjust—and will remain so.

(b) Training of doctors to take good work histories and improve knowledge of diagnosis and treatment is essential. This should be a function of medical schools, Schools of Public Health and organized medicine.

(c) The Congress must incorporate diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of job-related disease and disability into the national health insurance act.

(d) EPA and OSHA must be strengthened and impose more rigid standards on agriculture and then enforce them. This is not just for hired farm workers; farmers die too.

10. *Earmark HMO Act funds for rural people* The Health Maintenance Act should be revised to earmark not less than 30 percent of these funds for rural people, and provide that if those funds are not expended in a given year they are either carried over or revert to the Treasury. The present act puts a premium on grant swinging and penalizes those who need the service most. The present act is defective because it does not provide funds for construction of care facilities, transportation and equipment as in the original act.

11. *HMO administration is discriminatory* HEW administration of the new Health Maintenance Organization Act and the guidelines it has established for eligibility for that program, are inimical to the interests of the people of small town and rural America and must be modified, by legislation if necessary.

12. *More built-in discrimination* The National Health Planning and Service Act of 1974 threatens to intensify the urban bias in health service delivery with its 500,000 minimum population requirement for formation of health service areas. This is typical of the tendency for the writers of legislation to disregard the interests of rural people.

13. *Clearinghouse on research* There should be recognition of the importance of improved information on rural health and the availability of research findings to practitioners. A clearinghouse should be set up for these purposes.

14. *Nationalize Workmen's Compensation* Workman's Compensation laws do not cover the costs of job accidents, forcing the burden of those costs on the community or the injured person. Workmen's Compensation should be Federalized as there is no hope that the States will revise their laws to fit the task because of the influence of corporations who seek to evade paying the real costs of production.

15. *Support and improve existing programs* The concern and support expressed for a comprehensive system of national health care should not obscure the need for support and funding for existing programs, e.g., migrant health program, nor excuse concerned people from monitoring, policing and criticizing existing programs.

0091

SECTION 5

agricultural production

Gil Padilla

All Americans and, indeed, a good portion of the world's population have reason to be vitally concerned with the output of our agriculture and the care with which it acts as steward of our land and water resources.

The strength of our agriculture has been based largely on an enormously rich land base, on the skill and hard work of working farmers and farm workers, and on science and technological improvements. We have been profligate with our land resources for several centuries, and the latest fear of those concerned is that the new system of production—high energy and the large scale use of poisons and insecticides—threatens to permanently damage the means of human existence.

As long as there is active competition in a healthy agriculture, the interests of farmers and consumers tend to coincide, and together they have a common interest in seeing that the "middlemen" (the businesses between the farm and the home) do not "rip off" either the producer or the consumer.

There is no satisfactory substitute for the working family farmer either in conserving the land and its fertility or in producing crops, but working family farming is in continuing jeopardy in this country. The total number of farmers reached a peak in 1937 and since then has declined very rapidly. From a total of nearly 7 million farms in 1935 the number dropped to less than 3 million in 1969. In a little over 30 years over 60 percent of the farms disappeared. Most of the farms which disappeared were combined with other units, and most of those lost were below average size. By 1969, 151,000 farmers (5.5%) controlled (by ownership or lease) over half (54.4%) of all land. Corporations (21,500 of them) held 9 percent of the total farm land.

Concentration varies among crops, but there is no doubt that the concentration of control of land and output is growing very rapidly, posing a threat to freedom of entry to the land, to competition and fair prices, i.e., to even more effective exploitation of the consumer. Many people also believe that large scale farming with its heavy reliance on commercial fertilizers, insecticides and other poisons, is a source of increasingly intolerable pollution of the environment, and a threat to the life of the land itself.

Freedom of entry into farming is made extremely difficult for most people when the average investment required per worker was $54,100 in 1970 compared to $3300 in 1940. One respected authority estimates that the initial investment required for a modest commercial farm is about $250,000.

There is no doubt that many of the farms which have disappeared in recent decades were too small to permit the operators to make a decent living, but there is also no doubt that concentration has already run far beyond the requirements for maximum efficiency and a good living. U.S. Department of Agriculture studies indicate that a farm with a work force of 1½ workers per year is large enough to achieve maximum efficiency in productivity. Beyond that point, the costs of management and paperwork increase, to offset any other gains. The increase in farm size beyond that point is the result of the use of economic power and government production controls which were rigged against the small and moderate size farmer.

The use of economic power includes the power of rich corporations to buy land in large quantities and operate it with relative inefficiency, but

00922

it includes much more. Three fifths of the food dollar goes to the middleman, the jobber, processor, distributor, and retailer. Most of that amount ends up in the accounts of a fraction of the businesses in the food industry. For example:

- There are 32,000 middle-sector firms in the food industry, but 50 of them pocket 75% of the profits.
- Corporation control over just 13 lines of food resulted in price overcharges of $2.1 billion in one year.

On the farm supply side

- 65 percent of the value of tractor sales go to 2 corporations, John Deere and International Harvester.

The farmer faces great concentrations of power when he buys and when he sells. The combination threatens his survival and the welfare of the nation.

There are other ways in which working family farmers are placed in jeopardy. Corporations can make money on "tax-loss farming"; real estate speculators, riding that old capital gains racket, drive the price of land beyond the point where it can be used for farming; and the government has engaged in a relatively open conspiracy for 40 years to keep a cheap labor supply available to the big operators.

The drive of the big marketing processing corporations to make money and concentrate control of the market leads to "contract farming" which ultimately turns the farmer into little more than a sharecropper. He loses his independence and control of his farm.

This nation's policy toward its land and working family farmers is not a concern of just rural Americans, but it is particularly vital to them because it is the single largest source of employment and its wealth makes up much of the tax base on which rural taxing power rests.

The interests of all rural people can best be served by strengthening the working family farmer as the basic producer in agriculture. Governmental and private policies and actions which jeopardize the family farmer, jeopardize the entire community. (See also Section 3 on Land, Resources and People).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Charles Frazier

1. *Re-orient USDA* The forces which have led to increasing concentration of ownership and control of land and of farmers are complex and cannot be corrected by any simplistic program. The USDA must cease to be the Department of Agribusiness and become what it has always supposed to be, the agency to promote a healthy agriculture and protect the interests of consumers. It is a far cry from that today.

2. *Democratize USDA* USDA must be made more responsive to the needs of the majority of farmers and other citizens as contrasted to agribusiness. One recommended device would be to open up the Department to the public through the establishment of Advisory committees representative of independent family farmers, minorities, farm workers, consumers and environmentalists.

3. *Land Grant College Complex* Both land grant colleges and the Extension Service must reorient themselves away from their emphasis in recent years, on aiding bigness and high energy farming. More attention must be given to neglected areas like cooperative marketing structures, utility systems, technological displacement, food quality and taste, non-chemical pest control, the cost of agricultural inputs, rural health systems, off-farm employment and rural community development. To the extent that emphasis is on technology, it must be technology geared to the needs of small or average farms and the needs of consumers for nutritious foods.

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Reuben Johnson

The "Colleges of 1980," the black land grant colleges, receive only ½ of 1 percent of the land grant budget, under the control of the white colleges. This must be ended. Those colleges should receive their equitable share of allocations and be permitted to exercise discretion in their use.

The Extension Service must be moved and directed to use far more of its skills and resources on average and low income farmers. Its movement in the opposite direction has doubtless been in response to powerful and alluring forces, including the influence of those same forces on Congressional appropriation of funds. It is incumbent on both the Service personnel and the Congress to see that this long-time trend is reversed and that both land grant colleges and the Extension Service take on the broader responsibility of the welfare of people and the strength and unity of the communities of rural America.

4. *Farm Price Supports* No system of subsidy or price supports for agriculture should be tied to volume of production as they have been in past years, but should be designed to support farm family income. In 1971, the top 20 percent of recipients in the cotton program received nearly ¾ of the benefits.

5. *Ever-Normal Granary* The concept of the ever-normal granary should be re-established. It is not only a sensible means of removing temporary surpluses to support farm prices, but it also protects consumers at home and abroad from sudden upsurges in prices and actual hunger.

6. *Improve Farm Credit* Our system of farm credit, both for operating loans and loans for land acquisition for new or young farmers is inadequate. Existing programs should be reshaped, and the Federal and State governments should cooperate in establishing better credit programs, possibly patterned after the Canadian Farm Credit System.

7. *Strengthen Co-Operative Movement* The best alternative to the elimination of the working farmer and to the control of agriculture and its output by great corporations is the development of cooperatives, controlled by farmers or by farmers and consumers. In 1974, USDA spent barely ¼ of 1 percent of its total funds on cooperative development, most of that amount going into projects for the growth of existing cooperatives through mergers and centralizing authority while weakening membership control. A Congressional mandate to revitalize USDA's cooperative program is long overdue and not likely to be delivered without citizen pressure.

8. *Big Business Farmers* There must be legislation at both Federal and State levels to prohibit businesses with major investments in non-farm assets from engaging in agricultural production.

9. *Limit Food Advertising* Much of the food dollar is spent by agribusiness on advertising whose purpose is to peddle brand names as a weapon against the emergence of competition from new enterprises and cooperatives. Tax deductions for this kind of advertising as "business expense" must be severely limited.

10. *Trust Busting* The Federal Trade Commission should be funded to increase its efforts to inhibit and break up concentration in the food industry. The Congress must provide adequate funds for FTC's Bureau of Competition to undertake investigations and report to the Congress on the nature and degree of concentration in the food industry, including the impact of advertising and vertical integration on consumers.

11. *Agricultural Census* The proposed revision in the way in which the Agricultural Census will count farms is a threat to small farmers and consumers. No such change should be made, but if it is made it should be as the result of law and not by administrative fiat.

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12. *Land Use* The encroachment of strip-mining, suburban sprawl, and the second-home industry are a threat to the agricultural land base and should be strenuously regulated at the federal, state and local government levels. Preferential tax assessment for farmland is a recommended land-use tool, and should include provisions to the effect that owners retroactively make up the difference in tax revenues if they sell their property to speculative, non-public service interests within a specified period, such as fifty years. Minnesota has a land-use bill, which not only taxes farmers at a lower rate, but excludes corporate farmers from preferential assessment. Another useful model is the Saskatchewan Land Bank, through which land is sold to the state which then holds it in trust and leases it to working farmers.

13. *Land Speculation and Taxes* Federal and state tax laws facilitate concentration of control and land speculation. They should be studied in detail as part of a program for preventing the undermining of family farming, and a good beginning should be the elimination or drastic revision of the capital gains racket.

14. *Inheritance Taxes* Two threats to family farms are state and national inheritance taxes. The alternative to creating a special class by increasing the farm inheritance exemption is to provide an automatic source of credit when necessary to prevent inheritance tax elimination of a family farm. This should be done immediately through the Farmers Home Administration.

FARM LABOR

The average per capita income of migrant farm workers is $1654 per year. In 1972, workers with jobs off the farm part of the year did a little better, averaging $2,798. Farm workers are among the most poorly paid workers in the nation on a yearly basis; their children still work in the fields; federal safety standards are not enforced and often not promulgated, although agriculture is the third most hazardous occupation—even measured by obsolete standards. Farm workers are discriminated against, coming and going, in laws on Social Security, minimum wages, unemployment compensation and worker's compensation.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. *Social benefit legislation* Discrimination against farm workers in federal and state legislation must be eliminated. Farm workers should receive the benefits available to the rest of the hired working force of the nation, including unemployment insurance, Social Security, overtime pay and workman's compensation. Attempts to weaken the laws protecting child labor must be defeated.

2. *Consumer boycotts* Consumer boycotts by farm workers should be supported until they are assured of free, secret elections on their choice on unionization.

3. *Farm worker aids* Because of their migrant or isolated status, farm workers require special adaptation of programs, including outreach in Food Stamps and other programs like transportation of children to day care centers.

4. *Illegal Aliens* Illegal aliens are easily exploited and are a device for strike breaking. They are a deterrent to the unionization of farm workers. Employers of illegal aliens should be severely penalized.

5. *Child labor* There must be more vigorous DOL enforcement of laws prohibiting children working in the fields in areas where school is in session.

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SECTION 6

employment, jobs and training

"Whenever there is in any country, uncultivated lands and unemployed poor, it is clear that the laws of property have been so extended as to violate natural right."—THOMAS JEFFERSON, 1785.

James Patton

The right to a job at decent pay is one of the most fundamental human rights in an industrialized society where ownership and control are highly concentrated. In such a society, the need for a job is comparable to the need for land in an agrarian society. Both are not only a means of maintaining human existence, but "to have and to hold" are symbols by which we measure our neighbors and ourselves in terms of individual and social worth. In our society a person denied a job is a person who has been deprived of the most basic right to participate in society; and the quality of that job — as measured by community standards — and the amount and continuity of pay — goes far to fix the place one occupies in the scheme of things, frequently to the third and the fourth generation.

From the standpoint of education, training and jobs, the people of small towns and rural areas have suffered discrimination for many decades. By relying on local or even state resources — and inclination — to finance public education we have subjected millions to gross discrimination, for the basic ingredient in any job training program is a basic education. There is a mountain of statistics decades long showing that rural children have never had a fair break on education, and the discrimination continues.

Median earnings of employed persons in non-metro areas is roughly a fifth less than that of metro workers; unemployment in rural areas is more chronic.

Because "manpower" programs are primarily metro programs, and carry with them a heritage of discrimination, they serve rural people poorly and sometimes not at all.

Some of the evidence: Unemployment is defined and the figures are compiled in a manner that seriously understates the rural problem; money allocations are then made on the basis of these bogus figures; allocations of program funds to rural people, by law and administration, are not only biased by misleading figures but by law reflecting those figures aggravated by administrative policies.

The State controlled employment services were, from the beginning, a political compromise loaded against rural people. Their location and staffing reflect the weight of programs like Unemployment Compensation (UC) which also discriminate against rural workers. Later acts like the Area Redevelopment Act, tied to bogus unemployment figures, rather than poverty, continued the discrimination.

The Manpower Development Training Act of 1962, hailed as a major step in creating a "manpower" policy tied training to a "reasonable expectation of employment". It thereby greatly restricted the number and type of vocational programs (because of high unemployment in those areas) and the initial projects (few indeed) in rural areas were to train farm workers of which there was a surplus. (USDA claimed it could not hire black secretaries because there weren't any, but years after the MDTA program was established the Atlanta region had made no attempt to train rural people as secretaries.)

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The WIN program o. 1967 was also written to fit the needs of urban agencies. . . . And finally came the grea reversion, CETA, the Comprehensive Employment and Train ng Act of 1973, a part of President Nixon's drive to shift Federal functions back to state and local governments. Regardless of whether state and local officials can or will do a "better" job of administering the programs, the formula for allocating funds put half of them where they had always been, in the cities, and split the other half between unemployment (measured with bogus figures) at 37.5 percent and a final 12½% (⅛th) tied to the amount of poverty. Moreover, the law restricts eligibility for funding to "prime sponsors," an entity with at least 100,000 population, thereby restricting grants to 275 of the nation's more than 3,000 counties and about 150 large cities — with the small towns and rural areas blanketed into "balance of state."

Unemployment, underemployment, jobs and training . . . the scene is bad for rural people.

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RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. *Federal guarantee to each child* The Federal government should provide the funds necessary to put a floor under educational opportunity in the public schools for every American child.

2. *Federal public employment* Federal public employment programs must be redirected and greatly broadened to include jobs for meeting the community development needs in rural areas. Such jobs should include staffs for planning agencies, health delivery, housing delivery, legal services and education. Manpower training programs must be designed to recruit rural people and train them for these new rural jobs. Salaries for public employees under such a program should be competitive with the private market for comparable skills.

3. *Government—employer of last resort* The government must become the employer of last resort, in fact and not in rhetoric. People do have a right to a job or to ample compensation for being denied that right. Programs like Green Thumb and public service jobs should be continued and expanded. A permanent organization comparable to the Civilian Conservation Corps should be created immediately to give a break to the vast numbers of young people who have been shut out of our society.

4. *Study of discrimination* Every aspect of the educational and the so-called "manpower" programs (law, funding and administration) should be examined critically from the viewpoint of equity for rural people. The people to be served must be involved at every level.

5. *Poverty to guide allocations* The allocation of money, training and employment programs should be tied to poverty, with some possible recognition of unemployment, not the reverse.

6. *Less biased statistics* Equity for rural people and a rational approach to full employment, public employment and training programs call for changes in the definition of unemployment.

7. *Non-profits as backstop* Every employment and training law should include provision for funding non-profit organizations if governments concerned will not or cannot administer the programs with justice and equity.

8. *Formula for fund distribution* Funds should be distributed by formula, removing the implied incentive to administrators to allow rural options to lapse and then spend the money in the cities.

9. *Social costs are paramount* Some programs in theory or fact, are alleged to be more expensive to administer in rural America. If this is the only way equity can be achieved, sobeit. These alleged facts should be matched against the social costs of excluding rural people.

10. *Federalize employment service* The employment service should be federalized, and if this cannot be done, the states must be compelled to to give rural people equity.

11. *Repeal CETA* The new system of special revenue sharing which turns the manpower programs over to the states (CETA) is no guarantee that rural people will get any more service than they have in the past. It should be repealed and recreated as a national program. In the interim the "national" programs formerly financed out of special allotments must be retained and re-established where the funds are being turned over to regional or state offices. This is particularly true of the funds for migrant workers.

The "prime sponsor" definition should be deleted from the law, but, if it is retained, governors should be required to re-allocate their funds in accordance with the basic formula in the law.

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SECTION 7

rural housing and community development

. . . our rural areas and small towns have been depleted and deprived, not only of large parts of their population, but of the amenities and the opportunities that would have kept people there.
Sen. James Abourezk

Rural areas have about one-third of the nation's population and 60 percent of its substandard housing. About 30,000 rural communities lack adequate water and 44,000 lack waste disposal systems. Countless more have inadequate streets, drainage, and other public facilities. Many rural communities have witnessed their commercial areas deteriorating into fire-traps and the blight often associated with large cities, spread throughout their residential areas. Most of those small rural communities do not have the tax base to support the redevelopment of their towns.

HOUSING

This nation lacks a comprehensive housing policy designed to deliver housing to those most in need. Because of the higher incidence of bad housing in rural areas caused by lower incomes, less credit and fewer institutions necessary to deliver housing there, a national policy will have to address itself specifically to rural needs.

To provide decent housing for those persons most in need will require substantially more dollars than are currently being devoted to the task. By necessity, those will have to be "Federal" dollars. Currently the Federal government is allocating $2.6 billion per year to subsidize low-income housing while at the same time it is subsidizing middle and upper income homeowners to the tune of $11.3 billion in the form of deductible property taxes and mortgage interest payments deductible from taxable income — the higher the income and the fancier the home, the greater the subsidy. A housing policy that devotes 4-5 times the resources to those least in need is clearly misdirected. Furthermore, with a much higher incidence of bad housing, rural areas receive only about 35 percent of the direct Federal housing subsidies. (1972)

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *Comprehensive National Housing Program* A comprehensive national housing program must be established which equitably serves the full range of housing needs and which does not leave the national purpose at the mercy of local will or capacity, or private initiative or interests. The present patchwork of Federal housing assistance programs results in the neglect of millions of American families, and the enrichment of a few private interests at an unnecessarily high public cost. The primary purpose of Federal policy should be to provide adequate assistance for all who cannot obtain safe and decent housing through the private market at a reasonable portion of their income.

2.(a). *Emergency Rural Housing Administration* Until a comprehensive policy is established an Emergency Rural Housing Administration should be created with the purpose of providing minimum adequate housing, clean water, and sanitary facilities to the worst-housed of the nation's rural areas, and to do so with a 5-10 year period. The agency would be directed to ascertain the need for such housing in all areas with a population of 25,000 or less, to mobilize the resources of all agencies in developing a five-year plan for meeting those needs, and to act directly to aid people not being served by other agencies.

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(b). *Local Housing Delivery System* An effective new housing delivery system responsive to local needs must be created. We suggest that the successful rural electrification program provides a useful model. Local rural housing associations, chartered under State law but serving as delegates of a Federal program could serve to decentralize the basic administration of that program. Like the rural electric cooperatives, they should be controlled by those they serve — who, after all, have the most direct interest in effective implementation of the housing program. These local agencies should be required to enter into area responsibility agreements, so as to assure satisfaction of the national concern in meeting the housing needs of "every American family."

(c). *Financing and Subsidy Arrangements* Adequate finance and subsidy arrangements must be adopted, designed to bring decent housing within the means of everyone, with a choice of location and tenure. In order to meet the needs of lowest income families, adequate subsidies will be required to cover the following costs: (1) the cost of new or rebuilt housing; (2) the cost of adequate maintenance or rehabilitation of existing housing; (3) operating costs, including insurance and utilities; and (4) taxes.

Capital subsidies ought to be used to provide genuine opportunities for homeownership. We recommend that this be done through enactment of a loan program which would allow up to 50 percent of a loan to be made as interest-free, nonamortized second trust, on which no payments would be made before retirement of an interest-bearing, amortized first trust.

We cannot wait nor should we wait for the ultimate piece of housing legislation. There are things that can be done under existing legislation which would go far in meeting the needs of many people.

We urge the following immediate steps:

1. *More Personnel for FmHA* The Farmers Home Administration should have at least twice the personnel it currently has. In addition to increased numbers, the personnel hired must be better trained in delivering housing and community facilities to lower-income persons. In spite of the fact that most of FmHA's programs are loan programs, that agency must cease to view itself primarily as a banking institution. It should become and must be viewed as deliverer of housing and community facilities with a goal of revitalizing rural America.

To that end all annual program levels for subsidized housing should be at least doubled. Congress must insist that those programs administered by FmHA designed to house the lowest income persons, such as mutual self-help, farm labor housing, rent supplements, repair grants and general technical assistance, not only be implemented fully but become the cutting edge of the FmHA housing program.

It is time to . . . fulfill our commitments to millions of American families who live in rural shacks and urban tenements.
Rep. Parren Mitchell

2. *Farm Labor Housing Program* The farm labor housing grant program must be funded at greatly increased levels and regulations rewritten so that it can be utilized in migrant farm labor user States where it will be occupied for only parts of the year. The FmHA must be made to live up to its responsibility of seeing that projects constructed with its funds are adequately maintained, fairly managed, and open to occupancy without regard to the applicant's race. To that end a much greater reliance must be placed on tenant control over the decisions made concerning the operation of the projects.

3. *Maintain FmHA* Rural people and their elected officials must keep a constant vigil on suggestions, plans, or movements which would transfer the functions of the Farmers Home Administration to the Department of Housing and Urban Development where it would be lost to the urban planners, bankers, and real estate agents. By the same

00030

token every attempt to change the basic structure of FmHA from that of a direct provider of services with a presence in the local area to one similar to HUD's wherein it would only guarantee loans, contract to the vested interests for loan servicing, origination, and appraisals, must be blocked. FmHA's most redeeming value is its structure — one, which under a more sympathetic administration and more capable leadership, could serve rural America's housing and community development needs far better than any other existing institution.

4. *Department of Housing and Urban Development* Congress must insist that the Department of Housing and Urban Development is a housing and community development agency for all of America, not just those areas where mortgage bankers are abundant. HUD must be made to recognize that its clientele are low- and moderate-income persons and communities of all sizes in need of development and not lenders, home builders, housing project sponsors or cities who have been able to wind through the bureaucratic maze to get a few dollars for Model Cities and the like. Present legislation (discriminatory though it is) requires HUD to expend 20 percent of its Community Development money and between 20 and 25 percent of its housing money in rural areas. To achieve these goals, between 20 and 30 percent of its staff resources and research and demonstration money should be devoted to rural people.

The most effective thing HUD could do to facilitate rural housing would be to implement the conventional public housing program. Prior to its suspension nearly 40 percent of new public housing units were being located in nonmetropolitan areas. We urge that until the new section 8 program has been proven workable most of the money appropriated for the public housing program be used for the older but workable conventional program.

5. *Role of States* States must recognize the important role they play in housing rural people. That role runs to the following areas:

(a) Provide technical assistance to rural communities and organizations on Federal housing programs and planning.

(b) Provide information to its policy formulators on effects of State tax laws on low- and moderate-income housing.

(c) Regulation of housing and the housing industry through such measures as zoning, building, housing, and mobile home construction codes; mobile home park and siting regulations; and land-lord tenant law.

(d) Provide seed money loans for low-income housing projects.

(e) Provide coordination and planning assistance for Federal housing programs within the State.

(f) Provide housing services and enforce Fair Housing and civil rights statutes.

(g) Assist in land acquisition and market aggregation. The role of States as a provider of permanent financing for housing construction is extremely limited. The use of tax-exempt bonds to provide permanent financing is inefficient and inequitable — it robs all of us for limited benefits for a few.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community development programs which can be used in rural areas are spread throughout a half dozen departments, agencies, bureaus and commissions at the Federal level. Little if any coordination exists among them. As a result, a rural community intent on providing adequate community facilities and services to its citizenry, depending upon where it is located, might have to turn to HUD for block grant assistance, a different part of HUD for housing, the Farmers Home Administration for hous-

0031

ing and water and sewer funds, industrial park and community facilities funds, the Appalachian Regional Commission, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Public Health Service, the Community Services Administration, the Economic Development Administration, ad nauseum, and then should not expect much of a positive response.

Several basic points must be recognized when talking about rural community development: (1) rural communities generally have fewer of the basic community facilities such as adequate water and waste disposal systems, streets, sidewalks, fire protection, public transportation, medical facilities, etc. than do urban communities; thus their need on a per capita basis is higher; (2) rural communities more often lack a broad tax base which could support even minimal community development; (3) rural communities more often lack the sophisticated skills necessary to meet the planning and packaging requirements imposed by the Federal bureaucracy. With those basic points in mind, the following recommendations are made:

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *Create a Department of Rural Affairs* There must be created a Department of Rural Affairs, a new Federal department with responsibility for meeting the needs of rural people, including housing, community facilities, health, transportation, and other services. The new structure should be dominated neither by the agri-business interests of the Department of Agriculture nor by the metropolitan / real estate / banker / builder interests of the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

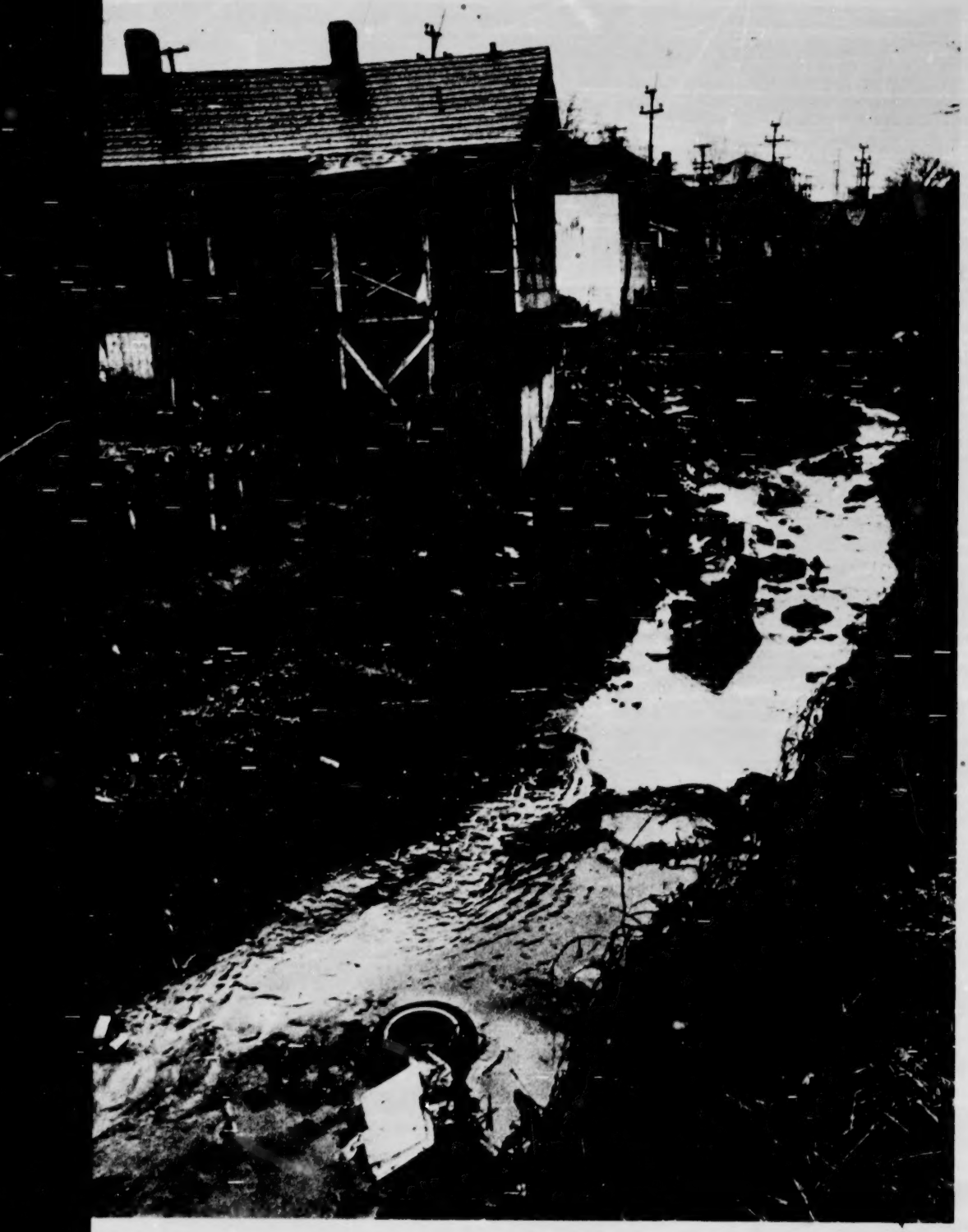
2. *Housing and Community Development Act of 1974* Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (Block Grants) must be amended substantially if it is to be useful in meeting rural community development needs. First, it must be funded at substantially higher levels. Second, the entitlement formula must be altered to recognize rural needs in view of the fact that rural communities lag behind urban communities in basic community facilities. (At the very least funds should presently be divided between metro and non-metro areas under the entitlement formula rather than on arbitrary 80-20 basis. Under the existing entitlement formula non-metro areas would receive 40 percent of the funds.) Third, needy rural communities should be given an entitlement rather than being required to apply for discretionary funds. The very communities that lack the sophistication to prepare adequate plans and applications for community development funds are the ones being required to do so. Fourth, local governments should not be required to compete with their State government for the same funds. If there is merit in funding State government for rural community development activity under this law, States should be allocated funds from a separate pot of money on an entitlement basis which reflects need and an ability to carry it out in a responsible and accountable manner. Finally, as long as rural communities are required to look to so many Federal agencies for their community development funding, it is absolutely essential that there be coordination between these agencies and that regulations be developed which encompass the establishment of priorities and simultaneous processing of applications under accepted community development plans.

3. *Rural Development Act of 1972* While the Rural Development Act of 1972 should not, and cannot, be viewed as a panacea, those elements of it which are vital to rural communities, should be implemented and funded. One thing is very clear—the usefulness of the legislation can never be tested and, if necessary, amended, unless it is implemented.

Bigness is not beautiful; giantness is not glorious; congestion is not joy. Nor is rural utopia. But equity is good and on that we should insist.
Clay Cochran
Executive Director, Rural Housing Alliance & Rural America, Inc.

0032

4. *Revitalize FmHA* A revitalized Farmers Home Administration, i.e., one with an adequate number of staff, skilled in delivering the housing and community development programs in rural areas (something that does not presently exist), should be looked to as the interim but primary rural development agency until such time as a Department of Rural Affairs can be created.



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SECTION 8

energy and rural people

The squandering of our fossil fuel resources through wasteful production and consumption patterns is now coming home to all of us—business, agriculture and ordinary consumers. We feel the effects with varying intensity, but neither geography nor class are barriers against the awareness that we must change our ways. Our need for energy is infinite, our resources upon which we now depend are finite, and so, now, are our choices. They may be reduced to one essential strategy: a judicious use of our fossil fuel reserves accompanied by a concerted effort to explore both neglected and untried sources of energy.

Habits are hard to change, however, and our policy-makers are not making the task any easier. The Budget proposed by the Administration for the Energy Research and Development Administration allocates less than 3 percent of research funds to conservation and only 8 percent to geothermal, solar, and advanced systems of energy use. The chief conservation measure endorsed by the Administration and the Federal Energy Administration is deregulation of domestic oil and gas pricing; a plan which fully realized may cut consumption, but which disregards the needs of low-income people, and encourages rapid exploitation of our remaining coal and oil reserves, with little consideration of the consequent impact on the land and other industries.

RESOURCES IN JEOPARDY

For example, water is basic to the existence of agriculture, small towns, and industry. Yet, although a neglected source of power itself, water is another resource being commandeered for frantic development of our last remaining low sulphur coal reserves. The 1972 North Central Power Study projected a demand of 2.6 million acre-feet of water per year for a huge 50,000 megawatt energy generation complex centered in Montana and Wyoming. The Natural Resources Defense Council points out that this is 60 percent more water than the annual consumption of New York City, and represents a little less than half the mean flow of the upper Colorado River, whose watershed supplies eight states. It would be diverted from agriculture and used for oil shale conversion, coal gasification, power plant cooling, and reclamation of strip mined land.

The Northern Great Plains Resources Program estimates that the projects will bring 200,000 more people to the region, whose public services will be hard put to accommodate them. Thus both agriculture and the small town may be sacrificed for the sake of meeting uncontrolled energy demands. Now, regional sacrifices may well be necessary to meet the needs of the nation, but it should be remembered that the driving impetus, acknowledged by fuel company officials, is profit, not need. The goal is to "establish Montana as a coal-mining state, and in a hurry", before research on how to lower the sulphur content of Eastern coals is completed.

THE CONSUMER PAYS

Moreover, at great cost to the consumer and independent dealers, the government has permitted the growth of energy cartels which have the power to control supply (and therefore prices). The largest members of these cartels not only own interests in oil, they own natural gas, coal, and uranium reserves. They may lease lands from the government for fuel

00034

exploration without reporting on their findings. Monopolistic restraints on production are ubiquitous in the energy industry.

As consumers, rural people are extremely dependent upon auto transportation for access to stores, jobs, doctors, schools, friends, etc., because of the lack of public transit systems. They are also losing their railroads, historically the most efficient form of transportation, and ironically the one mode of transportation which today needs much less fuel than it did in 1950 to transport the same load of freight or people.

THE ENERGY-FOOD COMPLEX

The giant corporations have made a colony out of Rural America.
Professor Barry Commoner

Government policies favor energy-intensive agriculture, and the impact of those policies is once again being felt most directly in rural areas. Agriculture uses more petroleum than any other single industry nationwide. It consumes about 2.5 percent of the nation's electricity. Since 1950, the use of fossil-fuel produced nitrogen fertilizers and synthetic organic chemicals has increased about 500 percent. In one year, from October 1973 to September 1974, fertilizer price increases ranged from 19 percent for phosphates to 142 percent for anhydrous ammonia.

Spiralling fertilizer costs are not strictly due to fossil fuel shortages. According to a study by the Center for the Biology of Natural Systems, while the fertilizer manufacturer paid 43 percent more for the energy needed to manufacture anhydrous ammonia fertilizer between 1970 and 1974, the price charged the farmer increased by 141 percent. The cost of propane, essential to the manufacture of plastics, tripled in 1973 largely because the petro-chemical companies were expanding their plastics production and bid prices up.

A food system wedded to wasteful energy uses is now requiring 6 to 10 calories of fossil fuel to get each calorie of food to consumers. It has been calculated that 80 percent of the world's total annual production of energy would be required to feed the world population with an American food system.

The irony is that agriculture could be an energy *producer*. Farming methods which are not fossil-fuel energy intensive have been found to be efficient, pollution free, less expensive, productive of more nutritious foods, and suitable to the scale of the average sized farm. Yet they are discouraged by USDA, holder of the purse strings over agricultural programs; they are discouraged by the land grant colleges, conductors of research; and they are discouraged by the extension service, influential relayer of information to our producers.

It is a comment on its effectiveness that organic farming has, without government or foundation support, managed to survive and grow in respectability as a profitable undertaking. Others are moving in this direction. Denver presently uses all of its sewage sludge for agriculture and plans on expanding the program; New York and Pennsylvania are considering joint efforts in the development of an alternate technology for agriculture, which would emphasize utilization of animal wastes and other natural products in agriculture.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. *There must be one National Office of Energy Research and Planning.* It must be the final arbiter of national policy planning in energy, with veto power over the decisions of other Federal agencies. It would have a long range planning function, and by requiring "Energy Impact Statements," it would attempt to gauge the consequences of national energy activities before the damage is done.

2. *Measures to hold down or decrease energy costs* should include:

a. A Federal oil and gas corporation, including coal, patterned along

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We are in danger of creating another Dust Bowl in places that are just recovering from the tragedies of 40 years ago.
Rep. Morris Udall

the TVA concept for the purpose of providing the consumers with a "yardstick" through development of oil, gas and coal resources on publicly owned Federal land containing large reserves.

b. Legislation to prohibit multiple ownership by one company of oil, natural gas, coal, and uranium reserves and to prohibit vertical integration in the energy industries, and compel divestiture.

c. Federal surveillance over the production, marketing and inventory of domestic fuels to avoid price fixing by a relatively few large producers.

d. Public ownership of local utilities and consumers participation in non-profit energy cooperatives should be encouraged and supported by the various levels of government.

e. Oil pricing regulation, e.g., a ceiling price for "old oil", and an "incentive" price for recovered and new oil, along with a higher price for imported oil. For gas, an equivalent system permitting an incentive price for maintaining production, and a price lid on old gas (from wells already operating). Incentive prices are strictly an interim measure to ease the transition from fossil-fuels to other sources of energy.

3. *Conservation measures should include:*

a. "Lifeline" pricing—a relatively low, flat rate for the first several hundred kilowatt hours of electricity consumed by residential users with higher prices thereafter including higher rates for non-essential commercial uses.

b. Railroads are one of the most energy efficient means of transportation. If they cannot be made to serve rural people they should be federalized.

c. Federal funds specifically appropriated for public transit systems in rural areas. Funds for public transit should be incorporated in every federal social service program.

d. More money for winterizing homes through Farmers Home Administration and Community Services Administration.

e. Measures to insure that fuel costs do not continue to increase for the poor. In addition, aside from sharing in the universal need for fuel for heat, cooking, hot water, etc., rural people are extremely dependent for their welfare and livelihoods on fuel for transportation, and their particular energy needs should be addressed in any comprehensive energy program, e.g., by providing for fuel stamps for migrant farmworkers and others whose income will not cover the cost of transportation to work.

4. *Development of alternative energy sources* should include funds for:

a. Hydro-electric, geothermal, solar, and wind power generation.

b. Agricultural use of solar energy, waste products, crop diversification, and new methods of weed and pest control. Improving the energy efficiency of farm machinery by using machines more precisely scaled for particular jobs.

c. The conference did not reach resolution on expansion of nuclear power generation, although many participants were deeply concerned about the hazards of nuclear fission and breeder reactor plants.

00136

SECTION 9

public education in rural america

"The extent to which rural people have been denied equality of educational opportunity is evident from both the products of the educational system and the resources that go into that system."
(THE PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON RURAL POVERTY, 1967)

Aaron Henry

Rural Americans have historically been shortchanged by the educational system serving them. The effects of this failure—illiteracy, lack of marketable skills, lost opportunity, low achievement and a limited capacity for self-government have had and continue to have a crippling effect on the society and on the lives and aspirations of rural children and adults throughout America. Rural school systems have been feeding young people urban curriculums. For generations rural children have been raised and educated at the expense of rural America. Over 80% of the rurally educated youth migrate out of their own community, seeking employment in metropolitan areas. Migration tends to occur at the peak of their productivity and no measures have been taken to reimburse the rural areas for the very real and burdensome expense. It is one cause for rural poverty.

The dismal failure of State and Federal policy to affect even minimal standards of education in rural areas is evidenced by the fact that in 1970, over 2 million rural adults had less than five years of schooling. For minorities, comparable figures are even more appalling—24.1% of the black population had left school by the fifth grade. The figures for Mexican-Americans and American Indians are much higher. Across all segments of the adult rural population, illiteracy rates are nearly twice those found in metropolitan areas.

Many rural children are being denied an equal educational opportunity as well—5.3% of the school age children living in rural areas were not enrolled in school in 1970. This figure is substantially higher than in the metropolitan areas (3.8%). Absenteeism is attributed to several factors. Farming families are often forced to pull their children out of school at harvest time. Children of migrants are constantly uprooted and moved from town to town as their parents seek employment. Children in rural areas frequently do not get the proper health care they need and as a result, illness and malnutrition are high. Poor rural families cannot always afford a school lunch or adequate clothing, and many schools do not provide free food. Finally, with centralized schools, problems of transportation sometimes prevent rural children from attending school.

In fiscal year 1975, elementary and secondary programs (urban and rural) were allocated less than 2% of all Federal outlays. For 1976, proposed funds are down 16%. Insufficient school revenues result in poor curriculums, inadequately trained and overworked teachers, low salaries, limited facilities and materials and a lack of counseling and guidance.

While these problems exist to some extent in many areas of America, it is clear that small towns and rural areas have been consistently shortchanged and discriminated against by Federal programs. HEW statistics are discouraging. In fiscal year 1973, $70 million were allocated for educationally deprived migrant children—92% of those dollars went to metropolitan areas. Of the $32.9 million spent for bilingual

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education, 80.2% was earmarked for the urban centers. Worst of all was the Educational Opportunity Grant Program. A total of $205.6 million were spent in 1973 and metropolitan areas received over 75% of it.

One half of the financial support for public education is derived from the local property tax in the United States. This form of support poses great difficulties for rural areas in financing schools. Rural real estate is often low in aggregate value and, even then, underassessed. Even when rural property is taxed at high rates, the revenues produced are seldom adequate to meet needs.

Rural education must be viewed as the most important tool for the prevention of poverty. Decent housing, health care and full employment cannot be attained if the rural educational system is inadequate. The uneducated person becomes the victim of progress rather than its beneficiary. Urban and rural discrepancies are many and must be recognized.

Moreover, there is an increasing belief that rural curricula and training should be differentiated from metropolitan "design". In other words, the function of rural education should be to train children to deal with their own environment rather than training them—almost wholly—for migration to urban areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. *Federal Financial Support* The Federal government should put a financial floor under an adequate system of primary and secondary education, to assure every American child the right to a basic education. Federal contributions should be allocated under a formula based on the number of children, per capita income, and the local tax effort.

2. *State Responsibility* States should increase their efforts to equalize educational opportunity by financial contributions to local school systems. The tax disparities between communities are great and it is the States' responsibility to insure that revenues are distributed equitably.

3. *School Consolidation* While Federal and State assistance is vital in meeting educational needs in rural areas, control over rural school districts must be left in the hands of local residents. Rural citizens must participate fully in decisionmaking. Undesirable consolidation is a logical and tragic result of the failure of Federal and State governments to adequately finance rural education. In some areas, the consolidation of rural school districts has become centralization for its own sake with some doubt that the child's education is the primary goal. Centralization tends to weaken communities and reduce or eliminate parental participation. School consolidation should be a decision made by the individual community involved.

4. *Direction of Rural Education* The quality and direction of rural education must be reevaluated to be more responsive to the needs of rural children.

5. *Multi-District Service Agencies* The Federal government must promote the concept of multi-district regional educational service agencies to assist local communities who need help when applying for State and Federal funds. A Federal office should be established to coordinate these services for rural education.

6. *Food Programs* Every school age child requiring food for adequate performance in learning should be provided for. Free breakfast and lunch programs help to diminish the destructive class discrimination which frequently precludes equal educational opportunity.

7. *Transportation* Every child should have an enforceable right to public transportation to and from school, regardless of the distance. This is a particularly great need, for example, on some Indian reservations but is by no means restricted to reservations.

00038

SECTION 10

rural economic development

NEED

From 1950 to 1970, there was a net outmigration from rural areas of almost eight million people. Many were forced to migrate because of the tremendous decline of the labor requirements of agriculture and the substantial drop in coal mining jobs. If this trend is not to continue during the next decade, an estimated 3.1 million jobs will have to be created in rural areas simply to absorb just the *males* who will reach labor force age plus those who become unemployed due to the expected continuation of decline in farm jobs.

If more jobs are not forthcoming, the implication for rural people is for more of the same of recent decades. Many of the brightest and the best of the rural population, raised and educated largely at local expense, will continue to flow out of the non-metro areas into the cities. This outmigration, however often blessed as being good both for the community which loses people and those which gain population, is one of the basic causes of the differences between the levels of income and the quality of life of rural and city people. (Internationally it is described, in part, as a "brain drain.") Census reports show that between 1970 and 1973 rural counties gained population faster than urban. The long term implications of this reversal are yet to be ascertained.

This spirit of co-operation, this willingness to work together in seeking out common solutions to common problems is a trait that is peculiarly relevant to Rural America.
Rep. Charlie Rose

WHO IS LEFT BEHIND?

Continuing an excessive outmigration depletes the populace of the working age people, and those who are left behind are likely to be the very old, the disabled, the poorly educated, the unskilled and the degraded, creating communities whose needs are more appropriately served through "welfare" measures than self-help programs. Obviously, there is a slim percentage fortunate enough to have the means to absorb the leavings, the small farms and businesses of the outmigrants, thus perpetuating the trend toward fewer and larger property holdings in the countryside—a trend whose consequences are not an unmitigated blessing.

RURAL AREAS—43 PERCENT OF THE WORKING POOR

One outstanding feature of rural people is the patchwork nature of the means of making a living. While the unemployment rate in 1973 was lower (on the average) for rural areas than metropolitan areas, it did not take into account the numbers of small farmers and farmworkers who must supplement farm income with non-farm employment. When these and other workers lose their "second jobs", they are not listed as unemployed, even though their families may be living at a subsistence level or below. While less than a third of the nation's population resides in rural areas, they contain over 43.4 percent of the nation's working poor.

JOBS ARE NOT ENOUGH

Employment needs cannot be isolated and treated in a vacuum. What is required are comprehensive programs designed to be responsive to the unique needs of particular communities and regions. Should such programs not be forthcoming, private business may still move into rural areas, but not necessarily to the benefit of the local citizenry.

00039

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Economic development of areas of high unemployment has been the express purpose of an impressive roster of government programs: Economic Development Administration, Appalachian Regional Commission, OEO's Special Impact Programs, the OEO/FmHA Rural Loan Program, and USDA's Rural Development Program. In nearly every case it has been narrowly perceived as the promotion of private business enterprises which will create jobs. This focus has led to the growing acceptance in government circles of a "triage" scheme of priorities, based on a three-way classification of rural communities: (1) those which will survive regardless of support, (2) those which will not survive no matter how much money (for private industry) is pumped in, and (3) those which can grow with public help, known in political parlance as "growth centers". The very term, "growth centers" is prophetic of their favorable treatment by the Federal government, which increasingly chooses to stake the welfare of rural people on the assumption that "growth center" benefits will "trickle down".

(In its more simplified state, the "growth center" concept is a bastard cousin of "metropollyanna". It is business oriented—not people oriented. If a new hospital is needed, it should be put where it is needed—not located as a pseudo grand design for creating a little Chicago.)

The problems with this point of view are:

1. There is little or no evidence to support the "trickle down" theory.

2. Private industries which locate in poverty areas are generally seeking cheap labor, thus perpetuating existing problems through low wages.

3. Industries which require high-skilled labor generally import their own from other areas, rather than instituting training programs.

4. No government agency is qualified or should be given the right to determine which communities shall live.

5. It supports private, profit-making industries over cooperatives, non-profit enterprises, and particularly public services which often hold promise of jobs, income and growth.

6. It largely excludes health, education, housing and other economic needs from its concept of "development."

7. It has seldom (with the exception of CDC's and theoretically the ARC) required that the communities affected decide what "economic development" would constitute for them.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. *Equity in Federal and State Programs* The most important thing that can be done for non-metro people in the U.S. is to give them equity in all Federal and State programs as they presently exist, and as they hopefully, improve. Equity in these programs will do more to improve the quality of life for rural people, provide more jobs, create more opportunity, slow down outmigration, improve health than any other means being offered. Indeed it is significant that 200 years after the birth of the Republic, no single public figure in the country has been making a continuing fight to give rural people equity in all national programs. It may be true that the cities will continue to grow, and some rural areas and small towns decline, but the expenditures by State and Federal governments should not continue to be weighted in favor of the growth of megalopolis.

It is in the area of public policy and public expenditure, particularly Federal policy, Federal expenditure and the Federal tax system that the hopes of rural America should primarily rest. Given equity in those areas,

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rural people can help themselves with an occasional lift from some big corporation hunting for a site for a new plant.

Recent administrative policies have favored loans over grants. According to the National Association of Counties, for example, less than 12 percent of the grant funds authorized by the Rural Development Act have been utilized. Poor communities which cannot afford to develop industrial parks without grant money, are thus missing out on the Act's benefits. Congressionally authorized appropriations for grants must be fully utilized.

"Rural areas" are not identical. They vary from prosperous farming economies based on rich land to tragically poor colonial areas, dominated by exploitative absentee owners. Obviously, the solutions of the basic problems of the resident population call for varying remedies.

2. *Full Employment* Most new non-public jobs are created by the great corporations which dominate our economic life. Under the present scheme of things, there is little government can do to influence their decisions except to maintain a level of full employment so that the unemployed, (those denied a place in American life), do not pile up either in the cities or rural areas.

Full employment requires the creation of publicly financed jobs which can help in providing many needed services in rural areas.

3. *Planning, Coordination and Cooperation Must Be Democratically Controlled* The tendency to erect one level of governmental structure after another on top of local government, particularly those dominated by non-elected officials, must be halted. Community controlled corporations, such as Community Development Corporations, can be effective agents of change by creating employment opportunities and services responsive to local needs. These and other grass-roots self-help efforts should be federally supported with credit and technical assistance.

4. *Not Every Town Can Be Industrial* Not every town may want, need, or be able to sustain an industrial park. For those which do not, there are other avenues to economic well-being. When we start supporting transportation, health care, education, community development, housing, etc., we will not only create jobs; we will affirm the rights of people to benefit from basic Federal programs regardless of where they live. We can no longer afford to make a discriminatory distinction between "private" and "public service" employment, such as multiplier effects and all the other benefits traditionally attributed to the "production of goods" economy.

Agriculture cannot be dismissed as a legitimate form of economic development. Labor-intensive producer cooperatives have produced high yields and environmental advantages. The Federal government should support them through offering low-interest, long-term credit, grants, and assistance in creating marketing mechanisms apart from existing market channels.

5. *Development of Indian Reservations* The Bureau of Indian Affairs' dominance has in some places inhibited the development of local management expertise. More Indians should be involved within the BIA to help develop local talent. BIA's basic education program should include a development component. For example, the American Indian Industrial Development Intern program, recently discontinued, should be reinstated within the BIA or Economic Development Administration.

The Federal government, in particular the EDA, should recognize organizations of Indians other than tribes as being eligible for EDA assistance.

It is essential that every effort be made to get Indian lands presently leased to non-Indian operators in the hands of Indian farmers and ranchers.

00041

6. *Railroads* The railroad system must be maintained in rural areas. Adequate transportation is essential to economic development. The most energy-efficient form of transportation is the railroad. Recent and continuing dismemberment of the rail system resulting from cheap oil and publicly subsidized roads—plus mismanagement of the railroads—will ultimately destroy many rural towns and handicap others. If we cannot maintain the railroad system under private control, it must be nationalized!

If railroads are allowed to abandon branch lines of their systems, the minimum price they should pay is loss of ownership of the land on which the track is laid as well as land, structures and equipment contiguous to or associated with it. The ownership of such land should be transferred to the states without compensation to the railroads, to be used for the economic development of the area in which the land is located.

0042

SECTION 11

rural public transportation

America's superhighways and rusted railways are both symptoms of a national policy that has enshrined the automobile and its offspring, megalopolis, at the expense of the people, particularly those in rural areas and small towns.

It has always been one of the foremost duties of a government to promote good transportation facilities at reasonable cost. In this country, for example, we gave away an empire of land to subsidize the railroad system, and we have expended the fruits of another on the vast superhighway system that has done so much to destroy the original investment.

Although attention has frequently been focused on transportation for farm and other products produced in rural areas, little attention has been given to public transportation for rural people—so little attention indeed that it is impossible to lay out a detailed program for an attack on the deficiencies.

The subjective evidence suggests the situation is bad and getting worse. In 1972, there were only 395 bus systems in towns under 50,000 population. In the last 15 years, 146 have disappeared, most of them in towns of less than 25,000 people. In a recent six month period in West Virginia, there was a 22 percent reduction in the number of buses and limousines licensed to operate in the state.

For the country as a whole, reliance on the private automobile to get to work rose from 82 to 87 percent of the workers from 1963-70. The percentage of people using public transportation declined from 14 to 10 percent of the workers. Rural people are even more dependent on the automobile—if they own one.

The massive increase in highway construction in recent years has tended to make matters worse. Buses and trucks now speed down superhighways, along new routes where no one lives, by-passing even the small towns. Truck transportation, encouraged by highway construction, has resulted in demands for further curtailing railroad service.

At the Federal level the neglect of transportation needs of rural Americans is nearly total. Almost since its inception, the Department of Transportation (DOT) has sought to escape from any responsibility for rural public transit. Although the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has the authority to reach into communities to improve transportation, it was agreed that HUD would abdicate these responsibilities to DOT. But when OEO sought DOT's assistance on rural transportation, the General Counsel ruled that DOT would provide such assistance only through its Urban Mass Transit Administration (UMTA), and that by the terms of that Act, UMTA was limited to metropolitan areas.

In 1973 Section 147 of the Federal Aid Highway Act authorized the appropriation of $30 million for a two-year period ending June 30, 1976, to carry out demonstration projects for public transportation in rural areas. The law unleashed a bureaucratic struggle between the Federal Highway Administration and UMTA, but nothing else happened. . . . Congress had authorized but did not appropriate any money. Finally in 1974 Congress voted a munificent $9.65 million and in November DOT issued some guidelines. Congress amended the law, making the guidelines obsolete . . .

DOT authorized one study of human rural transportation needs, but it turned out to be a study of whether small towns are really necessary!

0043

The bias of UMTA is made clear by the fact that since its inception in 1965, less than 5 percent of its grants have gone to cities with populations of less than 50,000.

The whole world of rural public transportation for people is a no-man's land except for the efforts put forth by OEO, private groups, local agencies trying to serve the aged and disabled, and some promising state activities, notably in Pennsylvania and West Virginia. (For additional detail see *Mobility in Rural America, Kaye, Ira,* published by the Rural Housing Alliance and Rural America, Inc. 1975. This study also includes brief notes on the tragic costs of an absence of rural public transport—medical care not received—the poor giving up major portions of their pitiful incomes to get to doctors or get their food stamps . . .)

Public transportation for rural people today is about where rural electrification was in 1930 when a great demonstration by the Department of Agriculture, the power companies and the American Farm Bureau Federation proved conclusively, based on the most elaborate and nonsensical "evaluation" techniques at hand, that electrifying rural America was economically unfeasible.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. *Rural Transportation Agency* The Congress should establish an independent Rural Transportation Administration, comparable in many respects to the Rural Electrification Administration, authorized to provide subsidies, low interest loans for capital facilities, technical assistance to public and private bodies. The Congress should stipulate that this agency is responsible for carrying out the provisions of a program comparable to those called for in a resolution passed by the 1971 White House Conference on Aging, modified to apply to all rural people. No funds, loan or grant, should go to any agency which does not in fact permit consumer participation in policy and planning. All contracts for funds should specify area coverage, to preclude skimming the cream of non-metro areas where density and income are most favorable. (The following recommendations A thru E are an adaptation of the White House Conference resolution. Parentheses mark points where "rural" has been substituted for "elderly". There is no intent to omit concern for the elderly.)

"a. The Federal Government shall immediately adopt a policy of increasing transportation services for (rural) people. The policy should be flexible encompassing various alternatives. Both system subsidies and payments to individuals may be needed, the choice depending upon the availability and usability of public and private transportation.

"Subsidies should be made available not only for existing systems, but also for the development of flexible and innovative systems, especially where there are no existing facilities.

"b. The Federal Government shall act immediately to increase support for the development of transportation for all users, with special consideration given to the needs of the elderly, the handicapped, rural people, the poor, and youth.

"c. Publicly funded programs for (rural) people shall be designed so that transportation will be required as an integral part of these programs, whether transportation is provided directly by the program or through other community services.

"Public policy shall require coordination of existing transportation and/or new planned transportation with publicly funded programs for (rural) people.

"d. The Federal Government should move immediately to adopt a policy which will both increase the level of funding available to the development and improvement of transportation services and also foster

0044

the coordination of all forms of transportation, public and private, at federal, state, regional, and local levels of responsibility. The Congress of the United States is urged to immediately adopt legislation to convert the Highway Trust Fund into a General Transportation Fund to be utilized for all modes of transportation.

"A portion of the General Transportation Fund shall be made available for the development of new transportation services and the improvement of existing transportation services for (rural) people.

"c. A broad program to develop people-delivery systems in rural areas should be undertaken by the Federal and State governments, based on demonstration projects such as those conducted by the Office of Economic Opportunity, the Appalachian Regional Commission, Green Light, and others.

"Legislation should be passed enabling and requiring public, social, health, and employment services in rural areas to help provide transportation and outreach; removing legal barriers such as taxi rates and car, taxi, and school bus insurance restrictions to such transportation services; and financing such services for people in rural areas."

2. *Rural Transportation Advocacy Agency* The CSA, HEW, DOT, USDA, DOL, and private foundations should pool grant funds for the support of a non-profit organization to play the role of researcher, organizer, publicist, ombudsman, advocate, and clearinghouse for human transportation in rural areas with a role in that field comparable to that played by the Rural Housing Alliance in housing and community facilities.

3. *Paucity of Data* The paucity of data on rural people's transportation need and response must be overcome. No rational policy can be developed in the absence of more information.

4. *Presidential Coordination* The President should issue instructions to all agencies to establish formal lines of communication and guidelines for support and coordination of rural human transportation.

5. *Consumer Participation* Careful safeguards must be built into any transportation program to assure consumer participation and to make certain that in the absence of diligent Federal, State and local efforts, needy people are not abandoned.

6. *Model State Act* The various State transportation acts should be researched to produce a model State rural transportation act to help the State legislatures.

SECTION 12

rural justice and legal assistance

"There are more lawyers serving the poor in the city of New York than all of the South put together" DAN BRADLEY, Office of Legal Services, CSA

Justice is a result of a chain of beliefs and cultural institutions including the establishment of laws based on fundamental fairness, the enforcement of these laws by well-trained and fairly motivated police forces and judges, access to skillful advocates who operate in the public interest, and a system of corrections which will assist, not destroy the individual who is deprived of his freedom. The quality of justice is determined by the weakest of the links in this chain.

SUPPLY OF LAWYERS

Urban areas have far more lawyers per person than rural areas. In 1971, places with population in excess of 500 thousand had one lawyer per 223 persons; in places of 250 thousand to 500 thousand, there was one lawyer per 254 persons; in places of less than 250 thousand population, there was one lawyer per 936 persons—one fourth as many as the large cities.

The results of these statistics are far reaching. In rural areas they adversely affect the quality of the administration of justice, law enforcement and defense in criminal actions. Moreover, it effectively precludes representation in many civil cases, especially those involving the poor as plaintiffs, and those, commonly called law reform cases, which tend to upset the status quo in a given locality. In other words, most rural people do not have access to the personnel which can effect social change and increase their power to protect and control their own lives.

It should be made clear, of course, that a mere plethora of lawyers is no guarantee of justice and equality because lawyers eat and collect money for that and other purposes. The paucity of lawyers in small towns and rural areas is in part the result of the inability of the population to support them, either by individual payment or by paying them through publicly supported institutions. In other words, the situation calls for some influencing of the creation and direction of new social institutions, but creation is not enough as is indicated by the distribution of legal assistance under existing legal aid programs.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE IN RURAL AREAS

Many rural judges are "lay judges", i.e., they have little training in the basic concepts of due process and other constitutional guarantees. Many earn a part or all of their salary from fines imposed upon the accused. Some are lawyers, but many of them are only part-time judges, engaging in active practice when they are not sitting on the bench. Associated institutions such as bail bondsmen or bail agencies are often absent in rural areas, as are diagnostic centers, half-way houses, therapeutic services and all of the panoply of contemporary rehabilitation services widely accepted in metropolitan centers.

0046

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Rural police forces often consist of elected county sheriffs and their appointed deputies. The sheriff is usually a politician first and a law enforcement officer second. He and his deputies often lack the training and skills necessary for fair and unbiased law enforcement. Sadly scattered evidence of recent efforts to improve law enforcement efforts in rural areas is not encouraging. These efforts are carried out generally with using Law Enforcement Assistance Act funds—a revenue sharing scheme under which about $2.4 billion has been spent for the upgrading of police forces and the criminal justice system in the U.S. Those efforts include the increase in personnel (not necessarily trained), equipment such as guns and similar crime fighting apparatus (Alice's Restaurant really happened) and the establishment of detective units to track down marijuana users.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

There is a constitutional right to adequate legal counsel at every stage of the judicial process for one accused of a crime, and each State has an obligation to provide that counsel when a person is unable to pay. Yet, in rural areas many low-income persons accused of crimes are denied that right. They are more often assigned untrained and inexperienced counsel due to the frequent absence of public defender agencies. If a public defender does exist, he may be a private attorney chosen because he submitted the lowest bid for his services.

CIVIL LEGAL ASSISTANCE

While there is no constitutional right to a lawyer established in civil matters, individuals have rights worthy of protection such as the right from interference by the government, consumer and environmental issues, the right of access to specific social benefit legislation, etc. In rural areas those basic rights are often denied simply because there are not sufficient lawyers willing and able to take such cases. For the poor in rural areas the problem is intensified by the fact that any legal assistance they could obtain must necessarily come from government supported attorneys.

Legal assistance for the poor has been delivered primarily through the Office of Economic Opportunity's Office of Legal Services. That office is operating under severe budget restraints, presently $71.5 million per year or about $1.15 per eligible client. Although under a Congressional mandate to provide equitable funding between urban and rural people, Legal Services devotes less than nine percent of its budget to rural programs. The result is that throughout the South there is only one Legal Services lawyer for every 2,000 poor persons; in Kentucky that ratio is 1 for 20,000!

The newly created Legal Services Corporation, designed to replace the Office of Legal Services, has nothing in its authorizing legislation which assures more equitable funding for rural people.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. *Increased Funding for Legal Services* Much larger amounts of Federal funds must be made available to provide free legal services for the poor, both for criminal defense and civil matters. If those eligible and in need of service from the Legal Services Corporation are to be served, the appropriation of funds must be nearly ten times the amount appropriated in recent years for similar services. The $1.15 per eligible client made available in each of the last five years would buy those clients less than one minute of time in most fee-for-service law offices.

0047

The new Legal Services Corporation must provide equitable funding for rural areas. Such rural programs must be given sufficient funds to provide coverage for all rural areas within a program's jurisdiction.

2. *Delivery of Legal Services* Federal dollars used to fund the delivery of legal services, both criminal and civil, should only go to programs utilizing a staff office model. Experiments in funding fee-for-service attorneys (popularly called the judicare model) have proven it ineffective both from a quality and economic standpoint. It is obvious to even the most casual observer that legal insurance, vouchers, money orders and even hard cash cannot buy quality legal assistance if the lawyers are not there.

3. *Reform the LEAA* The manner in which Federal dollars under the Law Enforcement Assistance Act (LEAA) are granted to the States, and the purposes to which they are put, must be altered. A fair share of those dollars must go into rural jurisdictions to improve the quality of law enforcement, judicial process and corrections. Hardware, especially weaponry, should not be purchased with Federal funds. Indeed, the goal ought to be the disarmament of police as well as criminals. Funds for rural area police forces should not go for riot and crowd control measures, but should be used to provide for adequate communication systems and training to insure that recent court decisions relating to personal rights are disseminated and implemented. Funds should be used to upgrade the quality of rural courts and detention centers and for training rural judges, justices of the peace and jailers. Quality, action oriented research should be conducted to develop methods of streamlining and upgrading rural court systems to do away with or minimize the use of lay and part-time judges. More of these funds must be used to provide quality public defense for indigent defendants and for providing an adequate delivery mechanism in remote, sparsely populated jurisdictions.

4. *Reform Legal Education* The legal education system needs radical change ranging from reorientation of curricula to more equitable admissions policies. The emphasis should be less on developing an elite corps of manipulators and more on producing a broadly representative group of persons intent on and capable of producing equal justice. Law schools should revise their curriculums to address specific rural issues and practice as well as to train attorneys on how to work with and utilize paralegals. Attempts must be made to recruit and maintain students from rural areas who would be likely to return to serve their entire communities and not just those which can afford to pay them.

resolutions passed by the conference

RESOLUTION NO. 1

Rural America

Be it resolved that we endorse the creation of a broadly based, democratically controlled, non-profit advocacy organization—Rural America, Inc.

Be it resolved that the Nominating Committee be instructed to nominate a balanced slate of candidates which is representative as regards race, sex, geography and program interests.

Be it resolved that the election shall not take place earlier than August first, which will permit people to join Rural America, Inc. until June 30.

RESOLUTION NO. 2

Call for a Continuing Conference Lobbying Organization

Be it further resolved that there be created as soon as possible a continuing lobbying organization to further the policies of this Conference, i.e. the Rural America Conference and that it also be a broadly based, democratically controlled organization and that to carry out this task the Conference chairperson shall appoint a steering committee of fifty participants in this Conference and that the steps taken thereafter be decided by those fifty people who are to report back to us as expeditiously as possible.

And that everybody send suggested names and the appointment be postponed until at least May 15.

These Resolutions were passed unanimously at the final General Assembly of the First National Conference on Rural America, April 17, 1975.

0049

As long as the people in the middle can keep consumers and farmers decided, they can and we lose and the nation loses. **Rep. Mark Andrews**

...ays not stop with public words and good intentions. Let's commit ourselves to ...romise to work together ... as cohesive groups ... for the future of rural America.
Sen. Dick Clark

special resolutions passed by sub-groups at the conference

RESOLUTIONS **of the Ad Hoc Committee Meeting of People Interested in Community Action:**

Whereas, at the First National Conference on Rural America attended by 1400 conferees, the many accomplishments of Community Action Agencies in rural America were noted, especially in the fields of rural housing, outreach, program coordination, health services, energy conservation, employment training, rural transportation, and feeding programs. And, whereas, there were strong feelings among conference participants that these agencies should be able to continue advocating actions to help the poor. And, whereas, at the present time there is no other agency which truly represents the feelings and needs of the poor.

Whereas, increasing nonfederal share at a time of low employment and inflation places undue and unrealistic hardship on rural local communities.

Be it resolved that this conference recommends the Community Services Administration be continued as an independent agency with full funding of all programs at their authorized level.

And, be it further resolved that this conference recommends the required nonfederal share remain at 20%.

Approved and adopted by 51 conferees at an Ad Hoc Committee Meeting of People Interested in Community Action.

RESOLUTIONS **of Ad Hoc Researchers:**

1. Maintain, in the Census of Agriculture, both categories reflecting farm income criteria enabling observers to accurately assess income changes in the agrarian sector. These categories are the $250 and $2,500 income categories related to sales of agricultural products.
2. Thoroughly explore data collecting mechanisms for the 1980 Census of the Population which will not under-represent rural populations and/or rural minority groups.
3. Thoroughly explore mechanisms for the dissemination of vital data concerning rural populations that are capable of being understood by rural peoples and capable of being analyzed by rural researchers who are without the urban based complex of computer skills and technologies. In this process we insist that census people maintain the integrity of the rural community. This means the public presentation of detailed economic and social population characteristics for small, rural places, a move away from traditional policy which has aggregated valuable data to county and state totals, thus making irretrievable rural community information.

Comment: The systematic denial of a statistical identity of rural populations and/or rural minority groups is, in a modern, data based society, synonymous with the denial of said people's existence!

This suppression and under-representation of rural peoples has serious implications for rural program support, as well as prohibiting researchers from accurately analyzing the characteristics of rural populations.

Submitted by Ad Hoc Rural Researchers Fred Schmidt, Secretary
6 member group

0051

RESOLUTIONS **of Ad Hoc Participants from Land Grant Colleges:**

Submit a modest request to Rural America, Inc. for support of a bi-monthly communication among land grant college participants which will:

1. Contain up to date reporting on research findings from land grant colleges which are suppressed by these institutions.
2. Contain up to date reporting on research proposals that are turned down for funding in land grant colleges.
3. Share names of potential conscious-raising speakers to utilize in extension and agricultural education activities.
4. Share reviews and location of relevant non-print media materials reflecting rural America.
5. Distribute said bimonthly communicative piece to all interested parties.

Submitted by Ad Hoc Participants from Land Grant Colleges, Fred Schmidt, Secretary 56 member group

RESOLUTIONS **of the Chicano Coalition attending the First National Conference on Rural America:**

We, the Chicano Coalition, do hereby recommend that due consideration be made of the following:

1. Establishment of an office of Rural America, Inc. in mid-continental United States.
2. Equitable representation of Chicano oriented service agencies on Rural America, Inc. Board of Directors.
3. Equitable representation on the staffing pattern of Rural America, Inc.

To the Subcommittee on Agricultural Labor of the House Committee on Education and Labor and to the Subcommittee on Labor of the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare and to the Members of Both Houses of Congress:

1. We strongly oppose the Hatfield and Meeds bills (S. 860 and H.R. 632) and any other proposal to weaken the current provision of the Fair Labor Standards Act which prohibits the employment of child labor under the age of 12 in commercial agriculture.
2. We call upon the Congress of the United States to resist all attempts to subsidize further commercial agriculture through the labor of children.

   We take the position for the following reasons:

   A. The employment of children under 12 has a depressing effect on the wages of adults;

   B. Farming is the third most hazardous industry in the United States;

   C. The impact of pesticides and other working conditions has a serious effect on the health and safety of children and affects their health for years to come.
3. Further, we call upon the Congress to provide the day care facilities needed by families for the care of their children during the hours they work to harvest our crops.

Approved by the participants in Group Discussion #3, Hired Farm Labor—120 persons

0052

RESOLUTIONS **of the Native Americans attending the First National Conference on Rural America:**

1. Inasmuch as American Indians face the same problems affecting Rural America, we the Native Americans strongly resolve and urge that all resolutions, recommendations, and changes being written up for the record and for dissemination include a specific reference and inclusion for Native American participation and consideration.
2. Be it resolved that Rural America, Inc., in its deliberations and advocacy for Rural America support the Native Americans' request that the Economic Development Administration re-institute its American Indian Industrial Development Intern Program to assist in the economic development of Indian reservations.

Richard Tecube, Discussion Leader, Session 10 (Rural Economic Development) Group 3 (Development of Indian Reservations)
April 17, 1975

RESOLUTIONS ON HOUSING RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STATES

I. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

1. BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that state governments have the responsibility and should be urged to provide 1) information on available state or federal housing resources. 2) staff assistance in application documentation, 3) general and in ensive training programs, 4) market analysis, site selection, design and construction consultation to local county and regional housing authorities, non-profit organizations and rural communities and groups.

2. BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that state governments have the responsibility to break down the mythology surrounding the provision of housing subsidies and the recipients thereof, to assist local government in analyzing housing conditions and planning reasonable courses of action, and to assist communities to mobilize available resources, such as coope[illegible] extension services, in the implementation of courses of action.

3. BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that state governments have the responsibility to provide management advice and assistance to local or regional housing authorities, local non-profit or governmental sponsors of housing developments.

II. TAX POLICY

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that states should conduct a comprehensive, in-depth evaluation of their real estate, personal and income tax policies for the purpose of identifying the affects of those policies upon the existing housing stock and upon new construction. States should subsequently enact necessary reforms to insure that such taxation policies are geared to the maximum utilization and maintenance of the existing housing stock and to the facilitation of new construction. Examples of such tax policies might include:

1. Repair and home improvements necessary to bring units to meet code requirements could be exempt from increased real estate taxation.

2. Lower income households could be provided with rebates or exemptions from real property tax.

0053

. . . we must pressure Federal, state and local governments to insure that adequate tax bases are created in our rural communities.
George Vranish
Vice President
Pension Affairs, UMWA

3. Housing units receiving federal or state housing subsidy assistance could be exempted from property tax or be taxed at lower levels.

III. REGULATORY POWERS

1. BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that states should prohibit exclusionary zoning at the local level and to insure that zoning is used for the enhancement of living conditions and not for economic or social discrimination or to deter preservation and upgrading of existing stock.

2. BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that uniform statewide building codes dealing with multi-family, single family and manufactured housing should be enacted to ensure quality housing for all tenants and owners.

3. BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that state-wide housing codes should be enacted, provided, however, that sufficient resources are available for grants and loans for rehabilitation purposes to lower income property owners and to insure that people are not forced from their places of residence without adequate available housing alternatives.

4. BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that statewide codes should be enacted to insure that mobile homes sold or offered for sale in the state meet rigorous construction standards.

5. BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that rigorous legislation should be enacted to protect mobile house buyers from unfair and expensive dealer practices.

6. BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that rigorous legislation should be enacted to protect consumers against restrictive practices of mobile home part owners.

7. BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that rigorous standards be enacted for mobile home park construction and maintenance.

8. BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that all mobile homes shall be tied down and be placed on a permanent foundation.

9. BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that legislation be enacted to require mobile home parks in rural areas to provide underground tornado shelters.

10. BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that all states should enact fair and equitable landlord-tenant laws.

IV. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE BY STATES TO HOUSING EFFORTS

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that state government should provide seed money grants and loan funds for local government and non-profit housing efforts, as well as whatever subsidy assistance as it is able.

V. STATE-FEDERAL RELATIONS

1. BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that state governments should establish ongoing relations with HUD and Farmers Home Administration and that state government has the responsibility to see that HUD or FmHA funds are equitably allocated and spent within the state.

2. BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that state government should take a much more active role in influencing the shape of federal housing legislation and the administration of federal programs to insure that rural areas receive fair treatment by the federal government. For example, the 174 Housing and CD Act *requires* that 75% of those funds be spent in SMSA's and metro counties, as opposed to meeting the need where it exists.

0054

VI. PACKAGING AND MARKET AGGREGATION FUNCTIONS

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that state government has the specific responsibility to undertake market aggregation and project packaging, in small, rural communities particularly for the utilization of Section 8 assistance in order to insure that federal administrative costs cannot be used as an excuse to deny service to such localities.

VII. HOUSING SERVICES

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that state government has the responsibility to insure the availability of comprehensive housing services to all rural people. Such services should include: housing program information, legal assistance, homeownership and financial counseling, consumer protection information, tenant counseling, placement services, etc.

VIII. DIRECT FINANCING OF HOUSING BY STATE AGENCIES

1. BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that state housing finance agencies be required to finance housing units in direct proportion to the percentage of the population in need, particularly when such financing is done in connection with federal subsidy programs.

2. BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that it should be recognized by state government that such housing finance agencies have an important but limited role to play in providing decent housing opportunities to the citizens of the state. It should be recognized that public purposes and financing requirements of such agencies do not necessarily coincide and that housing services, technical assistance activities and other activities which are not income generating and which are legitimate public purposes ought to be financed from tax revenues.

IX. CIVIL RIGHTS

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that all states should enact comprehensive open housing laws and rigorously enforce same. The open housing laws must prohibit discrimination against people on the basis of race, religion, creed, national origin, sex, marital status, age and source of income.

X. BE IT RESOLVED that states should provide assistance to private developers, non-profit sponsors and local communities to help assemble sizeable parcels of land on which housing can be constructed. Such state assistance should include identifying areas suitable for development, providing an equitable means for securing large, unused parcels of land from corporate ownership; assisting in title clearance where there are problems of clouded title; financing the acquisition and development of parcels of land in those areas where private finance is not available; securing adequate professional services for the planning and design of residential development and providing an adequate infrastructure for residential communities.

XI. BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that state governments shoud recognize that decent housing is a right of every citizen and should structure their priorities to recognize this right.

Approved in Principal by the participants in Discussion Group #4—Rural Housing—State Responsibilities—40 persons

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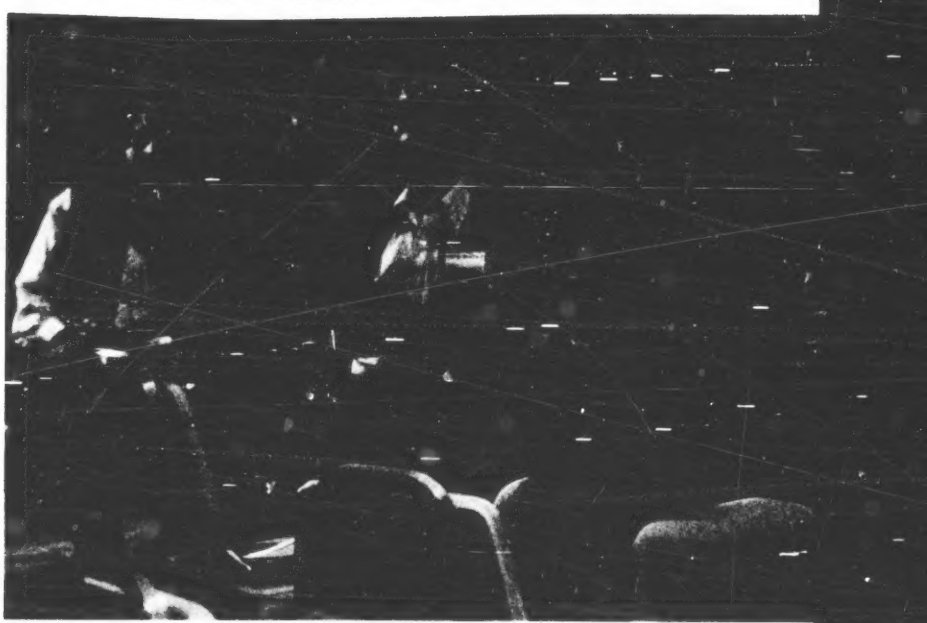
. . . a national nutrition policy must deal with the concentration of economic power in the farm and food industries.
Sen. George McGovern

Conversations at the Conference



Floor Participants

0056

call to the first national conference on rural america

APRIL 14-17, 1975 WASHINGTON, DC

. . . the time seems right to speak also of place, and of those Americans who by virtue of where they live are deprived of full participation in our political and economic system.
Richard Margolis
Chairman
Rural Housing Alliance & Rural America, Inc.

Much of American history comes down to people's pursuit of equity in the face of privilege, and to their insistence on public concern in the face of indifference. Despite lapses, most generations have managed to recast the great Jeffersonian goal—"equal rights for all, special privileges for none"—in forms that have continually reenforced the nation's democratic base and replenished its democratic dream. In the 1930s that dream was expressed largely in terms of class; in the 60s, of race. Both expressions remain valid today.

Yet we sense in the mid-70s a chance once again to take up the struggle and carry it forward—that is, to redefine the issue in language that this generation of Americans can readily comprehend and willingly act upon. The time seems right to speak not only of class and race, but also of *place*, and of those Americans who by virtue of where they live are deprived of full participation in the system.

We issue this call for the 1st National Conference on Rural America in order to begin to achieve equity and justice for those 60 million Americans who reside in small towns and rural areas. The Conference will assess our present social and economic needs against the historic shortcomings of both government and the private sector in dealing with rural people. Delegates will seek ways to assure rural Americans of their fair share of society's goods and services—health care and decent housing, jobs and educational chances, public transportation and public assistance —those benefits, in short, which taken together go far to define the quality of a citizen's life.

We hope the Conference participants will bring forth the broad outlines of a platform for rural Americans, including positions on such critical questions as access to land, credit, resources, energy, and production. The focus will be on people—the right of rural people to determine what actions their governments take, the right of farmers to produce the food needed by society in an economical manner without being the first link in some corporate chain, the right of rural people to control and conserve the land and resources around them. The Conference thus offers the first opportunity in several decades for people of wide-ranging concerns to come together and share their views on the future of rural America. We invite you to join us at this Conference and help shape that future.

Richard J. Margolis, *Chairman*
RURAL HOUSING ALLIANCE & RURAL AMERICA, INC.

0057

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0058

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0060

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0061

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